

The new US-Cuba agreement and the struggle in defence of the workers' state



Unity is strength, L'union fait la force, Es la unidad fuerza, Η ενότητα είναι δύναμη, اتحاد قدرت است, đoàn kết là sức mạnh, Jedność jest siła, ykseys on kesto, מִיחְוָה בְּכֹחַ, Midnimo iyo waa awood, hundeb ydy chryfder, Einheit ist Stärke, एकता शक्ति है, единство наша сила, vienybės jėga, bashkimi ben fuqine, אחדות היא כח, unità è la resistenza, 団結は力だ, A união faz a força, eining er styrkur, De eenheid is de sterkte, الوحدة هو القوة, Ní neart go chur le céile, pagrakaisa ay kalakasan, jednota is síla, 일성은 이다 힘 힘, Workers of the World Unite!

Socialist Fight is a member of the Liaison Committee for the Fourth International with the Liga Comunista of Brazil and the Tendencia Militante Bolchevique of Argentina.

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Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of the SFEB

1.WE STAND WITH KARL MARX: 'The emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves. The struggle for the emancipation of the working class means not a struggle for class privileges and monopolies but for equal rights and duties and the abolition of all class rule' (The International Workingmen's Association 1864, General Rules).

2. The capitalist state consists, in the last analysis, of ruling-class laws within a judicial system and detention centres overseen by the armed bodies of police/army who are under the direction and are controlled in acts of defence of capitalist property rights against the interests of the majority of civil society. The working class must overthrow the capitalist state and replace it with a workers' state based on democratic soviets/workers' councils to suppress the inevitable counter-revolution of private capitalist profit against planned production for the satisfaction of socialised human need.

3. We recognise the necessity for revolutionaries to carry out serious ideological and political struggle as direct participants in the trade unions (always) and in the mass reformist social democratic bourgeois workers' parties despite their pro-capitalist leaderships when conditions are favourable. Because we see the trade union bureaucracy and their allies in the Labour party leadership as the most fundamental obstacle to the struggle for power of the working class, outside of the state forces and their direct agencies themselves, we must fight and defeat and replace them with a revolutionary leadership by mobilising the base against the pro-capitalist bureaucratic misleaders to open the way forward for the struggle for workers' power.

4. We are fully in support of all mass mobilisations against the onslaught of this reactionary Con-Lib Dem coalition. However, whilst participating in this struggle we will oppose all policies

which subordinate the working class to the political agenda of the petty-bourgeois reformist leaders of the Labour party and trade unions

5. We support the fight of all the specially oppressed; Black and Asian, women, lesbians and gay men, bisexuals and transgender people against discrimination in all its forms and their right to organise separately in that fight in society as a whole. In particular we defend their right to caucus inside trade unions and in working class political parties.

6. We recognise that class society, and capitalism as the last form of class society, is by its nature patriarchal. In that sense the oppression of women is different from all other forms of oppression and discrimination. Because this social oppression is inextricably tied to private property, and its inheritance, to achieve full sexual, social and economic freedom and equality for all we need to overthrow class society itself.

7. We fight racism and fascism. We support the right of people to fight back against racist and fascist attacks by any means necessary. Self-defence is no offence! We support 'No Platform' for all fascists but never call on the capitalist state to ban fascist marches or parties; these laws would inevitably primarily be used against workers' organisations, as history has shown.

8. We oppose all immigration controls. International finance capital roams the planet in search of profit and Imperialist governments disrupts the lives of workers and cause the collapse of whole nations with their direct intervention in the Balkans, Iraq and Afghanistan and their proxy wars in Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, etc. Workers have the right to sell their labour internationally wherever they get the best price. Only union membership and pay rates can counter employers who seek to exploit immigrant workers as cheap labour to undermine the gains of past struggles.

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The following are just 8 of the 26 points of the political programme of the Socialist Fight Group which can be found at our blog here:

<http://socialistfight.com/>

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Socialist Fight Group Second Conference
Saturday 11 April 2015, Calthorpe Arms 252 Grays Inn Road,
London, WC1X 8JR, Kings Cross underground, No 46 Bus
towards City Of London, 4 stops.
Agenda Day 1: Sat. 11 April 11am,
International Perspectives: 11am—6pm
Session 1: 11.10 am—1pm Imperialism Today: Ukraine, ISIS,
Kurdistan and Cuba;
Reading: LCFI statements collected in new IDOT 11
1 —2pm Lunch.
Session 2: 2—4pm: History of the Fourth International and
Communism: J. P Cannon, Gerry Healy, James Robertson and
the “Spart family”, Ted Grant CWI and IMT, Workers Power
and LFI.
Reading IDOT Numbers 1, 7,8, 10 (new OC and GD: Revolution-
ary Communism: Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin or Mao?) and 12.
(IDOT 12 to contain LH’s documents on the history of the FI)
4—4.20 pm Coffee break
Session 3: 4.20-6.30 pm: Continue History of FI + The Marxist
Theory of the State, The Continuity of Trotskyism.
Reading: IDOT Numbers 6, 9 and 12. (IDOT 12 to contain
LH’s documents on the history of the FI)
Socialist Fight Public Meeting:
Imperialism today, what it is and how to fight the threat of
WWIII and fascism:

Are Russia and China Imperialist; the international political
nature of the struggle in Ireland, north and south, what is the
Anti Imperialist United Front, what is the difference between
the United Front and the Popular Front domestically and inter-
nationally?
Saturday 11 April, 7.30 pm – 10 pm, Calthorpe Arms, 252
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Latief Parker (Critique journal Editorial Board and former mili-
tant of the Unity Movement, South Africa)
Barbara Dorn, International Bolshevik Tendency
John McAnulty, Socialist Democracy, Ireland.
Gerry Downing Socialist Fight
Chair Ollie Coxhead
Sunday 12 April: British Perspectives
Session 1: 10-12 Noon (venue changes, available to invitees)
Trade Unions and the labour movement, Grass Roots Left,
Labour party, LRC, Bolshie Youth - Youth Perspectives
Lunch 12 -1pm
Session 2: 1 to 3pm: Economic and political crisis in Ireland,
Campaigns: Irish Republican Prisoners Support Group, Mumia
Abu Jamal, Housing, Palestine Solidarity Campaign.
Closed Session 3: 1-3pm Constitution, Where We Stand, Elec-
tion of CC and SF Editorial board, International Conference in
London in July. AOB.

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!

Editorial: Spectres are Haunting Miliband...

Ed Miliband could win this election by a landslide if he promised the working class an end to austerity or even if he promised any serious fightback at all against the bankers and transnational corporations that dominate global politics. When Tony Blair won the 1997 election he promised to respect John Major's cuts agenda; his main concern was to dampen the expectations of the working class. Opinion polls showed that he would have won a far more leftist programme.

Similarly with every Labour leader since Ramsey McDonald or Arthur Henderson, they understand that if you mobilise the working class in periods of great crisis and austerity their expectations are raised to such a level that they will emerge from their boxes to threaten the capitalist system itself and it will be very difficult to get them back in again. The spectre haunts Miliband.

What happens to the leftist parties?

A whole swath of leftist bourgeois nationalist and semi-working class centrist populist political formations have now emerged in a number of countries who the masses turn to in the expectation that they will fight their corner, they rise sharply in the opinion polls and get the smell of office and begin to backpedal in the promises to the oppressed masses.

Responsibility to defend capitalism seizes them and they begin to talk about 'rescheduling the debt' instead of the previous 'repudiating the debt' and seek to dampen the expectations of the masses, whilst still maintaining enough radicalism to keep sufficient support to get elected. Podemos in Spain, Syriza in Greece, Sinn Féin in Ireland, the Scottish National Party and the Greens wherever they are in opposition are examples.

And we know what will happen to these parties if elected. The previous high flyer in Ireland was the Irish Labour party. As Wiki informs us.

"On 11 June 2010, a poll by MRBI was published in *The Irish Times* which, for the first time in the history of the state, showed the Labour Party as the most popular, at 32%, ahead of Fine Gael at 28% and Fianna Fáil at 17%. Eamon Gilmore's approval ratings were also the highest of any Dáil leader, standing at 46%".

As soon as they indicated they would enter in coalition with the right centrist Fine Gael party their support waned and when they entered government in 2011 it haemorrhaged due to their imposition of austerity on the working class and poor. In the Local Government elections of May 2014 their support fell to 7.2%. Latest opinion polls show them at 5% which would result in wipe out in the general election in 2016. Pasok in Greece (-39%!) and the French Socialist party have suffered a similar fate.

And we know that the last Euro-elections in May also saw a rise of the far right and fascist parties, Ukip swept to victory in Britain with 27.5%, and 23 MEPs, ahead of Labour with 25.4% and 18 MEPs and the Tories with 23.94% and 18 MEPs also. In France the Front National (FN) took 25% and 24 seats with Hollande reduced to 14.5%. In Spain the governing right wing People's Party (PP) got 26.1% and 16 seats, the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) got 23.0% and 14 seats, Podemos got 5 seats and nearly 8%.

In Greece Syriza got 26.6% and 6 seats, Golden Dawn got 9.4% and 3 seats Pasok 8.1% and 2 seats. In Portugal, the opposition Socialists took 31.5% and 8 seats, in Ireland Fine Gael got 22% and 4 seats, Sinn Féin got 19.5% and 3 seats and Fianna



Unless Miliband promises the working class enough he won't get elected and Esther McVey will get in. But if he promises too much he will raise their expectations and they will cut up rough and attach his mates in the CBI. Spectres haunt him from left, right, and far right.. The Tory Employment Minister is infamous for her callous imposition of austerity and her tweets during the memorial service for the Hillsborough disaster.

Fáil got 22% and 1 seat. In Germany Merkel's took 35.3%, its national government coalition partner, the Social Democrats, got 27.3%. In Italy the centre-left Democratic Party got 41% but the right wing Five Star Movement led by Beppe Grillo's got 21% and 17 seats and the Forza Italia party of Silvio Berlusconi came third with 16.8% and 13 seats.

Overall at Brussels the centre-right European People's Party took 208 seats as against 186 for the centre-left Socialist bloc. But rapid changes since then have seen Podemos, Sinn Féin and Syriza rise sharply in the polls and these leftist formations look set for government. When they impose austerity, as they inevitably will, the far right emerges; in Dresden, Germany, the far right PEGIDA ("Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the Occident") is gaining momentum; this spectre also haunts Miliband.

Austerity as never before

Austerity such as never before facilitates a ruthless grab for wealth and power by capitalists. Britain's Institute for Fiscal Studies says that total government spending will be at its lowest level as a proportion of national income since before WWII; "So far, £35bn has been cut; the plan is to cut a further £55bn by 2019". Local authority services in England will be practically

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!

Steve Bell lampoons the viciousness of the austerity programme of the ConDem Coalition



wiped out by 2019, the TUC report *Austerity Uncovered* tells us.

"By 2015–16 the government will have reduced its funding to local authorities by an estimated 37 per cent. The total funding gap is forecast to increase at an average rate of £2.1bn per year until 2019–20 when it will reach £12.4bn. The total budget put aside for means-tested social care by English councils in 2014–15 stands at £13.68bn – a real terms cut of 12 per cent since 2010, while demand has risen 14 per cent in the same period.

Cuts have had a major impact on services. In the area of adult social care, 87 per cent of councils now only provide assistance in cases of 'substantial' or 'critical' need, compared to 47 per cent in 2005–06. There has been a 27 per cent fall in the number of older people receiving publicly funded social care since 2008–09 and a 17 per cent drop in the number of younger people with disabilities receiving social care."

The programme for revolution

So the spectre that is haunting Miliband is the same as that which haunts all leftist political parties that are tied to defence of the capitalist system. The only force that can resist the bankers, the transnationals and capitalism in its crisis is the organised working class. And it has to do that in strike action, occupations and ultimately by seizing power in every country, on a global scale.

But where is the leadership to achieve this? In its traditional leaders contradictions exist in the British Labour party, for instance that do not exist within petty bourgeois formations like the Greens, the SNP or Sinn Féin.

The programme for revolution asserts that these are bour-

geois-workers parties, tied to and funded by the trade unions.

The working class, via its militant vanguard, can win influence within these parties and begin to challenge the pro-capitalist leaders via the trade unions. And as it begins to succeed here the strangle-hold that the TU bureaucracy has over the union membership will begin to be loosened.

For this we need a rank and file movement in the trade unions which fights for industrial action 'with the bureaucracy when possible, against them if necessary'. Thus will militant leaders begin to take the leadership of the class and revolutionary party will begin to lead them. Then Miliband's real spectre will begin to acquire some flesh and blood.

And we know that this revolt is inevitable in the next few years. We know that human inequality was never as great as it is today. Oxfam tells us that the richest 80 people across the globe share a combined wealth of £1tn, as much as the poorest 3.5 billion, half of the world's population. And the wealth of the richest 1% of people in the world amounts to \$110tn (£60.88tn), or 65 times as much as the poorest half.

Every sector has its horror stories to tell, some such as housing we carry in this edition. Never was there more need for a revolutionary response to this attack on a global scale. Never was the crisis of working class leadership so acute as it is today – "the world political situation as a whole is chiefly characterized by a historical crisis of the leadership of the proletariat" as Trotsky wrote in 1938. We must all become fully engaged in the task of solving that crisis.

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!

Heartless Council leader Mo Butt (below) laughed at homeless family with small baby, muttered about queue jumping

Carol Foster reports on an increasingly common situation in local government. So much council housing stock have been sold off by 'right to buy', such are the budgetary constraints that councils are no longer able to fulfil their statutory duties to house even the desperately needy homeless. And you cannot get more desperate than a young couple with a baby with nowhere to go. But all councils, Labour or Tory, are willing executioners of the ConDem cuts. Carol tells the tale: "I have often wondered if there was an easy way to explain the evils of capitalism. What happened to me last week shows what can happen in the seventh richest country in the world. On December 15th I was on a picket line to protest about a Brent resident's eviction, this was at the Brent Civic Centre when fellow protester Isabel Counihan-Sanchez told me of a young couple with a 15 week baby who had been kicked out of their bed and breakfast hostel without anywhere to go.

Brent Council said, 'why can't the baby stay with friends?'. Labour Leader of Brent Council Mo Butt, who happened to be there, just laughed and muttered about queue jumping. From

09.00 until 16.00 I waited with a collection of people, including Isabel, John Tymon and others who all sat with us at various times until they were offered a place in Harlesden. We paid their taxi fare.

I explained that this was socialism in action and that although the ruling class try to divide us united we can achieve anything. My special thanks go out to Nicki Jameson and others who offered hampers and clothing. To the RMT for advice and solidarity and to Socialist Fight for financial aid and last but not least to the young couple Bridget, Anthony and young Anthony for their dignity in this terrible situation; these people give me hope for the future."



Evicted family left stranded by notorious Newham

Tuesday 20th Jan 2015, posted by Joana Ramiro (Morning Star)

A MOTHER and her three young children were left sleeping on a police station floor after her employer Newham Council failed to find her emergency shelter when the family was made homeless.

Newham only provided temporary accommodation for Zineb Saafan and her three under-sixes after Focus E15 campaigners descended on the council's housing offices yesterday.

Ms Saafan — who works as a cleaner on minimum wage at the council's Stratford High Street offices — had to spend the night in Forest Gate police station after her private landlord's two-week eviction notice ended.

The council would only offer her hotel accommodation two hours away in north London — ignoring her need to be near her job and her children's school, she told the Star.

When Ms Saafan refused to leave the housing offices, the council called the police.

"They said you must find somewhere else to go or go to the police station," she explained.

Together with her children aged six, three and one, Ms Saafan ended up on the floor of the police station, her luggage doubling as pillows and with coats for blankets.

Ms Saafan said station staff refused her daughter access to the toilet and when she asked for water police told her she was "not in a hotel."

The next morning she turned to the Focus E15 Mums for help. Campaign spokeswoman Sarah Kwei said it was "astonishing" that the council could not house one of its own employees.

She said the housing situation in the borough was quickly deteriorating. "The same situation happened to me, my mum and my little brother when I was a teenager — sleeping in a police station because they wanted to find us a place out of London. "That was years ago and it's only got worse."

Another woman with a young son was reportedly also sleep-

ing on the Forest Gate police station's floor the night Ms Saafan stayed there. Ms Kwei said: "She wasn't even the only one, it's really disgusting."

"We have the Carpenter's Estate just outside (Newham housing offices) Bridge House, which has hundreds of perfectly good council homes available."

The Focus E15 campaign occupied one of the estate's empty buildings to highlight the mismanagement of social housing in Newham. Yesterday, campaigners met one of the first new residents on the estate, which Ms Kwei labelled a "massive victory" for the group. But Ms Kwei warned: "There's still hundreds of homes left empty there. "We need to get the rest of Carpenters Estate back into public use."

A Newham council spokeswoman said: "This family is not the only one in need of our assistance. "We have a very limited supply of accommodation we can offer to those who need help."



The Focus E15 Mums campaigning for Zineb Saafan and her three under-six year old children, forced to sleep on Forest Gate police station floor by 'notorious' Newham council.



Henderson vs. GMB: Socialism on Trial 2015

Keith Henderson was dismissed from his job as a regional organiser by the General, Municipal and Boilermakers (GMB) trade union for mounting a picket at the House of Commons on 30 November 2011 on behalf of the demand of a decent pension for GMB members who were low-paid workers demanding their right to a decent pension. They had democratically decided on the action at their branch meeting.

A number of Labour MPs respected the picket; this did not please the Labour leader, Ed Miliband, and his office contacted the GMB General Secretary, Paul Kenny, indicating their displeasure. Mr Kenny phoned Keith and shouted at him, saying that an article he had written was "too left wing".

Keith lost his Employment Tribunal on 30 September 2013 on the grounds of unfair dismissal. However the Judge concluded that, as he had contended, "left wing democratic socialism is a philosophical belief for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010".

The Tribunal went on to hold that although the principal reason for the Keith's dismissal was his conduct "a substantial part of the reasoning behind dismissing the Claimant was because of his philosophical belief and was an affective cause of his dismissal"

Outrageously the right wing bureaucrats of the GMB have now gone to the Employment Appeal Tribunal (EAT) to overturn this latter part of the ruling because every militant and socialist can now cite it if victimised by their employer or trade union, or both in unison (pun intended, this is increasingly common).

They are so determined to extinguish this chink of light opened up for rank and file trade union militants and socialists by Keith's principled struggle that they have already indicated that if they lose the EAT they are willing to take the case to the Court Of Appeal, it has already cost GMB members hundreds of thousands of pounds in legal fees!

John McDonnell MP wrote to Paul Kenny on 18th October 2013:

"On the day of the co-ordinated industrial action on pensions in November 2011 Keith did a great job in organising picket lines at Parliament and I joined those picket lines. The atmosphere on the picket line was good natured and in the best traditions of the trade union movement of solidarity. Many Labour MPs supported the strike and rightfully respected the picket lines. This appears to have upset some in the office of the Labour leader. ...

This must be the first time a trade union, and possibly any employer, has been found to have considered a person being a Left wing democratic socialist as part of the reasoning for sacking him.

I am sure you agree that the union would not want to be associated with any finding of discriminatory treatment of an employee on the basis of his belief in democratic socialism."



Keith Henderson: his struggle in the GMB has won the principle that: "left wing democratic socialism is a philosophical belief for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010"

Demonstrate outside the EAT Tribunal

Keith Henderson vs. GMB Union 10, 11, 12 February Employment Appeal Tribunal, Fleetbank House, 2-6 Salisbury Square, London EC4Y 8AE (nearest tube station is Blackfriars station)

We call on all serious trade unionists and socialists to support the Demo outside the Employment Appeal Tribunal

Fleetbank House, 2-6 Salisbury Square,

London EC4Y 8AE (nearest tube station is Blackfriars station)

at 8.45 am on Tuesday 10 February.

Please attend the hearing itself on 10th, 11th and 12th February to show solidarity and give moral and political support to Keith in his struggle which is on behalf of the entire working class.

Sign the petition, http://www.petitions24.com/no_witch-hunts_in_the_gmb_union_reinstate_keith_henderson

We urge all serious trade unionists and socialists to express their support for Keith by writing to Paul Kenny, GMB General Secretary (Paul.Kenny@gmb.org.uk) to urge Keith's reinstatement and an end to witch-hunts against socialists in the GMB.)

Contact Graham Durham, LRC London Organiser c/o Willesden Trades and Labour Hall, 375 High Road, Willesden, London NW10 2JR

Paul Klee, exhibition Tate Modern

16th October 2013-9th March 2014, London

Reviewer: Alan Hunter

Paul Klee was an important German abstract artist who lived through Revolutionary developments in Germany. Born in 1879 he saw the advent of the German Revolution as well as the inter war years and the rise of Fascism in Germany. He was a colleague of Wassily Kandinsky the Great Russian abstractionist. They both worked in the Bauhaus and were both active in the Der Blaue Reiter movement in Germany.

Klee's aim in his art was to make 'visible the invisible' He used many mediums particularly, Gouache pencil and water colours. He was interested in Colour and Line. He advocated the use of colour using different aspects and making his art translucent with many oranges and Blue's.

In 1914 he travelled to Tunisia and was enraptured with the possibilities, travelling with Franc Marc and others it is in this period that Klee begins to master colour using delicate watercolours he represents Tunisian Holy cities. The First World War of 1914-1918 greatly affects Klee and the use of abstraction is a means of showing what he feels "Klee becomes increasingly productive seeing abstraction as a means to disassociate himself from the World at War, The more abstract the art the more horrible this World, he writes " [1].

Revolution occurs in Germany when the German Fleet mutinies reminiscent of the Russian Revolution of 1917. "Mutinies in the German fleet lead to a Revolution, echoing the Russian Revolution of 1917" [2]. In 1919 there is an uprising led by the Spartacists under the Leadership of Rosa Luxembourg, Wilhelm Liebknecht and Franz Mehring. "Spartacist uprising in Berlin, in April, a Bavarian Soviet republic is briefly established and Klee joins its action committee of Revolutionary artists. Within weeks the Republic is overthrown". [3].

The German Social democratic Party betrays the Revolution and Leaders like Eduard Bernstein and Karl Kautsky betray the heritage of Marx and Engels and side with the Imperialists during the Horrific war that follows.

Klee escapes to Switzerland where he begins to experiment with Watercolour, gouache ink and Graphite. His watercolour on chalked and primed Linen Rembrandt Sheet 1918 is a classic example of what he thinks of the war.

Other works are His Friendly place 1919, showing aerial combat and the beginning of His Oil Transfer works using watercolours to transfer line and drawing. In Switzerland Klee meets Hans Arp Tristan Tzara and other members of the Anti-dada Group. "Klee develops the 'Oil Transfer method of reproduced drawings or particular details by tracing them over a sheet of painted paper". [4].

Klee is now a teacher at the Bauhaus. In 1923 Klee holds his exhibition exhibiting works like Static-Germany graduation 1923 and Assyrian Games 1923.

Klee had shown in 1918 his sympathies for the short lived Soviet republic "That part of us which somehow aims for eternal values would better able to receive support in a communist Community" [5].

Klee continues to represent his different paintings using the Oil transfer method and his use of geometric shapes demonstrating his master of Line, Colour and Shape and totally in control of how the picture plane should be represented. Other mediums that Klee used were Cardboard and using watercolours with China ink.

His Overture series of paintings where he uses paint pen and ink where he represents the picture of Peace and an end to War and Militarism. From 1923 Klee starts to use Lettering in his images searching for that elusive space involving colour and line which he wanted to show his inner feelings and emotions.

The use of Diagonals and squares and triangles becomes a common trademark of Klee's work. It is abstract pointillism. Klee's use of Rectangular shapes which are dubbed magic squares can be compared to Moholy-Nagy's great geometrical constructiveness. "Yet the investi-



gation of appearances should not be underestimated". [6].

In 1933 fleeing from Nazi Germany Klee went to Switzerland and eventually took up Swiss citizenship. In his mural of 1924 Klee started using Tempera in his pictures using different shades of colour and a repetitive line of xs. "The picture with its shades of purple, green and yellow appears very dark. It is covered with X's and seems to be divided into a mass of small squares without however there always being a contrast of colour between them". [7].

Klee had a tendency to apply a subjective idealist method to his art. He was influenced by Ernst Mach who Lenin refers to in Volume 14 as an Empirical critic. Mach rejects the external world by constructing a reality made up of sensations. This was a return to Berkeley and his Idealism rejecting the fact that the External world is a reflection of material objects and that is the true source of Knowledge. Klee's reliance on Mach is a weakness but in his art of representing his ideas Klee was trying to make the Invisible Visible. "He succeeded in combining geometrical shapes objective representation, negation of Artistic style." [8] "Klee used a spray technique whereby he covered part of the paper with a Stencil and sprayed the free places with watercolours" [9].

During the 1930's Klee continually strove to oppose Fascist Social realist art with his abstractions signifying his Anti-Fascist Art. Revolt of the Viaduct 1937 "This picture with all its menace is a declaration of war on the Nazis who if they been unable to impose complete artistic conformity had at least successfully suppressed all individual art". [10].

Revolutions of the Viaduct 1937.

Paul Klee was a Great revolutionary artist who in his use of abstraction and by using watercolours, graphite, and pencil drawing used line and shape to create art of Revolutionary implications. His participation in the short-lived Republic shows his credentials as a Revolutionary Communist. I will leave you with Klee's comment on his involvement in his fight for communism and his total opposition to Fascism and Barbarism "Right from the Beginning it seemed that this communist republic would be short-lived, but it did give us the opportunity of checking our subjective in such a community" [11].

Notes

1. Tate Modern Booklet Paul Klee
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid
4. Statement By Paul Klee Tate Modern
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Partsch.S Klee Taschen Germany. P.55
8. Ibid. p. 60
9. Ibid. p. 60
- 10 Ibid. p.92
11. Statement by Paul Klee Tate Modern.

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!



Irish Republican Prisoners Support Group

PO Box 59188, London, NW2 9LJ, irpsgroup@gmail.com

The new address for letters, cards, books etc. for this political prisoner is:

Ursula Ní Shionnáin,
Ionad Dóchas,
An Cuar-Bhothair Thuaidh,
BÁC 7,
Éire.

Ursula Shannon,
Dóchas Centre,
North Circular Road,
Dublin 7,
Irish Republic



The Irish Republican Prisoners Support Group highlights the case of Ursula Shannon (opposite), who is a PhD student, graduate of Trinity College and prominent member of socialist republican group Éirígí, and her co-accused John McGreal and Colin Brady were found guilty of firearms offences by the no-jury Special Criminal Court after a short trial and sentenced to six years in February 2014. She is a fluent Gaelic speaker and would appreciate correspondence in Irish.

Statement from Republican Political Prisoners in Maghaberry: Entrenching Conflict

Following the DUP sponsored disruption of the Stocktake the emboldened attitude of the Jail Administration has been obvious. Having disregarded the August 2010 Agreement the Administration is content to simply tinker at the edges of its failed Controlled Movement Policy.

There is no doubt that the physical entrenchment of controlled movement is being presided over by an enthusiastic NIPS hierarchy. The No 1 Governor, Alan Longwell and his underling Governor, Malcolm Swarbrick are both personally overseeing construction work in Republican Roe House.

Like other failed Jail Administration actions before, this latest is characterised by an absence of dialogue and added belligerence from the Administration. On the morning of work commencing notices to prisoners were slid under cell doors minutes before informing RPP's that structured work was to be commencing on Roe 4 followed by Roe 3. This was followed by a barrage of verbal abuse and banging on cell doors along with torch lights shone into cells.

When cell doors were opened they revealed a heavily guarded construction site caged by metal bars and sheeted steel. All areas were sealed off except for a narrow passage leading to our

canteen and yard patrolled by aggressive screws.

Governor Malcolm Swarbrick has been keen to use recent construction work as a means to provoke conflict. When asked by RPP's why he was causing the most recent disruption his response was "you have been issuing threats". It was pointed out to Swarbrick that RPP's had not threatened anyone Swarbrick then stated that the threats were from outside the Jail.

Clearly Swarbrick and indeed the wider Jail Administration are intent upon attempting to hold RPP's as hostages against present and future actions outside the Jail. Later that same day Swarbrick activated an alarm and ordered a dozen riot squad onto Roe 4 who then isolated a RPP from his comrades without cause or reason for 24 hours.

From his arrival Swarbrick has adopted the posture of a British colonial administrator dealing with unruly natives. His 23 years experience with the prison establishment in Britain is no substitute for dealing with political prisoners. Hence he should return to where he came from and take his racist, imperialist policies with him.

His efforts to break the collective resistance of RPP's is being encouraged and supported by long-time POA stalwart and arch bigot Governor Brian Armour who continues to hold a controlling influence within the Jail Administration. None of these individuals have any constructive role to play in Republican Roe House. Their continued presence only fuels continued tensions and conflict.

Republican Political Prisoners, Roe House, 17.01.15



Picket of Channel 4's HQ in London on 17 Jan. against the planned sitcom about the Great Famine, Photo by Demotix

Austin Harney, 10 January: "The BBC does not seem to be taking this matter seriously. No mention of institutionalised anti - Irish racism and potential genocide that killed at least one million people, practically wiped out an entire Gaelic speaking population and forced millions of Irish people to leave Ireland against their will to this day. I won't find it funny to watch a comedy associated with two people looking like skeletons in a humble abode with a couple of days to live. I won't be laughing when a tenant chops up his horses to feed his children. I won't be amused when an ordinary Irish woman is cook-

ing potatoes for her sons and daughters, and then the food turns rotten that the family have nothing to eat. There will be no laughter from myself when people are eating grass. Finally, who will find it funny when a farm labourer is begging for food in a work house, is told to leave, and then has to open his jacket in order to dump a dead child on the counter? If incidents of this nature do not occur in this comedy, then it will be an utter distortion of the truth and the Irish Famine will be trivialised all over again in Britain. The people who are defending this programme could be snookered!"

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!

Who shot Michael Collins and why?

By Gerry Downing: A posting of a Michael Collins photo on Facebook prompted a huge debate (as it always does). This was my tuppence worth:

Well, the question in the Treaty and the Civil War was, what was Ireland's relations going to be when the war was over? Britain had defeated the Boers in South Africa before the war (1903) and this was the second big test. Sinn Féin under Arthur Griffiths wanted a dual monarchy, had bitterly opposed Larkin and Connolly in the 1913 Lock out and after and had opposed the Easter Rising. They became the leadership of the national struggle by default but Griffiths was ousted by de Valera as president of Sinn Féin and the rebellion as the nation swung left at the 1916 executions.

But Griffiths remained and his politics remained and Collins gravitated to his outlook of subordinating Ireland to the British Empire again.

De Valera opposed the Treaty but weakly, apart from during the Treaty election hustings but on the ground the best of the fighters rejected it out of hand. Ernie O'Malley's *On Another Man's Wound* makes that absolutely clear, nor did he give de Valera's Document No 2 a second thought. It is clear from his account and from the details that have emerged of the sophisticated military tactics of Tom Barry and his men at (the battle of) Crossbarry that far from being on their last legs they were developing as a powerful military force and the outright defeat of the British forces was now a real possibility.

And surely that was why Britain sued for peace. 'Terrible war' and Free State stories about the IRA on its last legs was so much propaganda.

Basically Collins capitulated to Griffiths who was

always a supporter of the British Empire, but wanted a little home rule to keep the workers and small farmers in check with a bogus 'independence' under the King.

The truly radical forces were the left republicans, Liam Mellows in particular, whose speech during the Treaty Debates is an absolute classic international socialist republican call to arms. It reads as fresh today as the day he delivered it. This was the radical alternative, learned during his enforced exile in America where he met revolutionary socialists of every hue and from his connection with the fledgling Irish Communist Party, led by men like Sean McLoughlin and Roddy Connolly (before he became a TU bureaucrat).

They combined the national liberation struggle with the struggle for socialism, inspired by the Russian Revolution and Mellows took them seriously and issued a manifesto from his cell which made the connection which would inspire the working class and small farmers to fight.

That was why they shot him and his three comrades on 8 December 1920 and others like Erskine Childers and carried out the Kerry atrocities. Counterrevolution to allow the big Dublin capitalist and the big ranchers to maintain their trade relations with the empire at the expense of the 'lower orders'.

And that counterrevolution gave us modern Ireland and Michael Collins was its chief architect. Griffiths did not have the authority or respect to accomplish it on his own.

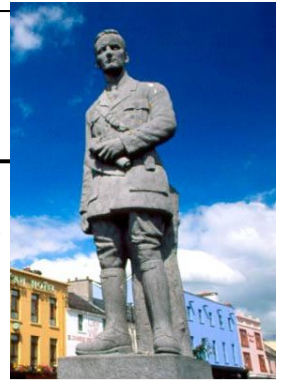
The Ireland of the gombeen man and the slum landlords and the vicious capitalist bastards (William

Martin Murphy) and the clerical fascists who gifted us with so much child abuse was made possible by that counterrevolution.

And Collins was not 'assassinated' or 'murdered', he fell in a Civil war action by the local IRA unit who were defending republican held territory against an enemy convoy.

And my understanding is that Denis "Sonny" O'Neill shot him with the final round of the engagement as they were breaking off and Collins though it was over. It was a fluke shot, but the local IRA were doing their duty in defence of 1916 and its Republic.

Collins and his Free Staters were defending the economic and political interests of the British Empire. Which was why Churchill gave them those big guns to bombard the Four Courts, offering to paint them green to let him know who was the real master. And we now know that the British Army itself, as it made its way to Dublin docks to leave Ireland, opened up on the Four Courts and secured the surrender, as a final favour to their new neo-colonial Free State servants.



Statue of Liam Mellows in Galway

POW List: 27 March 2014:

ALL IRPWA

Maghaberry Prison
Old Road
Ballinderry Upper
Lisburn

The North of Ireland

BT28 2PT

ROE 4: IRPWA

- Joe Barr
- Brian Cavlan
- Jason Ceulman
- Martin Connolly
- Colin Duffy
- Dominic Dynes
- Gareth Feeny
- Harry Fitzsimons
- Damien Harkin
- Neil Hegarty
- Seamus (Scotchy) Kearney
- Sean Kelly
- Nathan Hastings
- Brendan McConville
- Sean McConville
- Alex McCrory
- Anthony McDonnell
- Mark McGuigan
- DD McLaughlin
- Seamus McLaughlin
- Gerard Mac Manus

- Brian Sheridan
- Kevin Vernon
- John Paul Wootton SSU

- Gavin Coyle.
- Austin Creggan
- Desmond Hamill
- Tommy Hamill
- Martin McGilloway

ROE 3:

- Ciaran Collins
- Gabriel Mackle
- Damien McKennan
- Eugene Mc Loone
- Martin McLoone
- Gary Toman
- Willie Wong
- ROE 3: Cogús
- Eamon Cassidy
- Danny Doyle
- Dermontt McFadden (Derry)
- Tommy McGuire
- Ta Mc Williams
- Phil O'Donnell
- Tony Taylor

Hydebank Wood
Hospital Road
BELFAST BT8 8NA

Female Republican
Wing - Hydebank
Prison:

- Sharon Rafferty (East

- Tyrone)
- Nuala Gormley
- Christine Connor (Co. Antrim)

Portlaoise Prison
Dublin Road
Portlaoise, Co Laois

E3, Portlaoise Prison

- Vincent Banks
- Michael Barr
- Kevin Braney
- James Brennan (Co. Kildare)
- John Brock
- Ciaran Burke
- Desmond Christie
- Sean Connolly
- Bernard Dempsey
- Dean Evans
- Sean Farrell
- Cormac Fitzpatrick
- Stephen Hendricks
- David Jordan
- Sharif Kelly
- Nick Kendall
- Nick Mc Bennett
- Jim McCormick
- Edward McGrath
- Stephen McGowan
- Declan Phelan
- Brian Walsh (Cork)

E4: Teach na Fáilte

INLA

- Eugene Kelly (Dundalk)
- Noel Mooney (Dublin)
- Non-INLA E4
- Joe Conlon (Dublin / PPD)
- Liam Grogan Kildare (Convicted and sentenced in England)
- Tarlach Mac Dhomhnaill (South Fermanagh / PPD)
- Michael Mc Hugh (Crossmaglen / 40 years no remission); awarded 1/4 remission
- Darren Mulholland (Louth / Convicted and sentenced in England)
- David Murphy (Co. Louth)
- E2: Cogús
- Charles Anthony Deery (Derry City)
- Noel Callan (40 Years, no remission); awarded 1/4 remission
- Gerard Carroll (Louth)
- Niall Farrell (Louth)

- Patrick Gordon (Co. Armagh)
- Tony Hyland (Dublin / Sentenced & Convicted in England)
- Michael McDonald (Louth / Sentenced & Convicted in England)
- Dalton McKevitt (Louth)
- Michael McKevitt (Louth)
- Joe O'Brien (Wexford)
- Patrick Tierney (Co. Armagh)
- E2: Unaligned
- Colin Brady (Dublin)
- John McGreal
- E1: Unaligned
- John Daly (Dublin)
- Aiden Hulme (Co. Louth / Sentenced & Convicted in England)
- Robert Hulme (Co. Louth / Sentenced & Convicted in England)
- John Keogh
- Finton O'Farrell (South Armagh / Sentenced & Convicted in England)
- Declan Rafferty (Co. Louth / Sentenced & Convicted in England)
- E1: Limerick Real Sinn Féin
- Dean Fitzpatrick (Dublin)
- Stephen Fogarty (Dublin)
- Joseph Kirwin (Co. Laois)
- Buddy Nolan (Dublin)
- Ken O'Reilly (Co. Limerick)
- Seán Ryan (Co. Waterford)
- Cabhair**
- Mountjoy Prison**
- North Circular Road, Dublin 7.**
- Pat Barry (Donegal)
- Magilligan Prison**
- Point Road, Magilligan Co Derry BT49 0LR**
- Tony Friel
- Dóchas Centre, North Circular Road, Dublin 7**
- Éirígi**
- Ursula Shannon

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!

The Glenanne Gang, Britain's hired assassins in Ireland

as told by Wikipedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glenanne_gang

The Glenanne Gang or Glenanne group was a secret informal alliance of Northern Irish loyalist extremists who carried out shooting and bombing attacks against Catholics/Irish nationalists in the 1970s, during the Troubles. [1]

Most of its attacks took place in the area of County Armagh and Tyrone referred to as the "murder triangle". [2] It also launched some attacks elsewhere in Northern Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland. [3] The gang included British soldiers from the Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR), police officers from the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), and members of the Mid-Ulster Brigade of the illegal Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF). [4] [5]

Twenty-five British soldiers and police officers were named as having purportedly been part of the gang. [6] Details about the group have come from many sources, including the affidavit of former member and RUC officer John Weir; statements by other former members; police, army and court documents; and ballistics evidence linking the same weapons to various attacks.

Since 2003, the group's activities have also been investigated by independent inquiries: the 2006 Cassel Report, and three reports commissioned by Irish Supreme Court Justice Henry Barron, known as the Barron Reports. [7] A book focusing on the group's activities, *Lethal Allies: British Collusion in Ireland*, was published in 2013. It drew on all the aforementioned sources, as well as Historical Enquiries Team investigations.

Lethal Allies claims that permutations of the group killed about 120 people – almost all of whom were "upwardly mobile" Catholic civilians with no links to Irish republican paramilitaries. [6] The Cassel Report investigated 76 murders attributed to the group and found evidence that British soldiers and RUC officers were involved in 74 of those. [8] RUC officer John Weir claimed his superiors knew he was working with loyalist militants but allowed it to continue. [9]

The Cassel Report also said that some senior officers knew of the crimes but did nothing to prevent, investigate or punish. [8] It has been alleged that some key members were double agents working for British military intelligence and RUC Special Branch. [5][10] Attacks attributed to the group include the Dublin and Monaghan bombings, the Miami Showband killings, and the Reavey and O'Dowd killings. [5]

Many of the victims were killed at their homes or in indiscriminate attacks on Catholic-owned pubs with guns and/or bombs. Some were shot after being stopped at fake British Army checkpoints, and a number of the attacks were co-ordinated. [11]

When it wished to "claim" its attacks, the group usually used the name "Protestant Action Force". The name "Glenanne gang" has been used since 2003 and is derived from the farm at Glenanne (near Markethill, County Armagh) that was used as the gang's main 'base of operations'. [12][13] It

also made use of a farm near Dungannon. [14]

Notes

[1] *The Cassel Report* (2006). Retrieved 28 September 2013.

[2] Tiernan, Joe (2000). *The Dublin Bombings and the Murder Triangle*. Ireland: Mercier Press

[3] *Seeing Red*. John Weir affidavit, 3 February 1999 [dead link]

[4] *The Cassel Report* (2006), pp. 8, 14, 21, 25, 51, 56, 58–65.

[5] *Collusion in the South Armagh/Mid Ulster Area in the mid-1970s*. Pat Finucane Centre; retrieved 2 January 2011.

[6] *Lethal Allies: British Collusion in Ireland - Conclusions*. Pat Finucane Centre.

[7] *The First Barron Report* (2003); retrieved 14 December 2010.

[8] *The Cassel Report* (2006), p. 4

[9] *The Cassel Report* (2006), p. 63

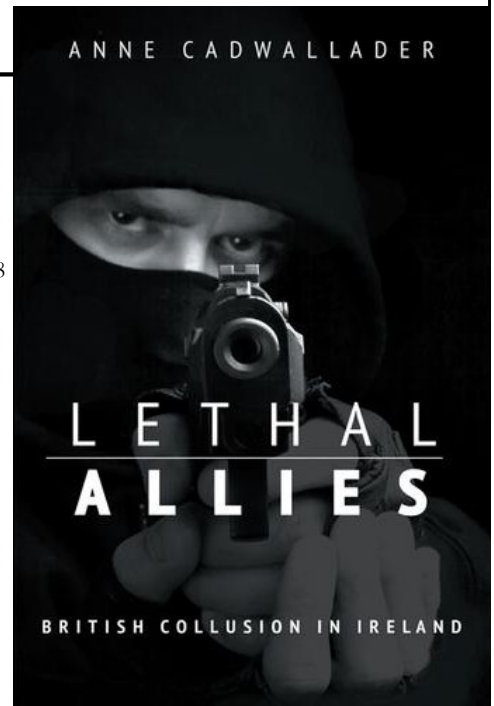
[10] *The First Barron Report* (2003). pp. 136, 172

[11] *The Cassel Report* (2006), p. 12

[12] *The First Barron Report* (2003). pp. 144, 145

[13] "Victims' families sue over UVF Glenanne gang collusion claims". BBC News, 15 November 2013.

[14] "Book claims 'indisputable evidence of security forces collusion'". BBC News, 24 October 2013.



This is one of the last photographs taken of the Miami Showband, Ireland's most popular band, before the massacre on 31st July 1975. From left: Tony Geraghty (murdered), Fran O'Toole (murdered), Ray Millar (absent), Des McAlea (blown clear, survived) Brian McCoy (murdered), Stephen Travers (wounded, survived).

The Transitional Programme; its relevance and application today

By John Barry

Introduction

The transitional programme is the method which was employed by the pioneers of scientific socialism Marx and Engels in the 'Communist Manifesto' and was used successfully by the Bolsheviks to become the method of the first four congresses of the Third International (AKA the Communist International). After the Third International suffered bureaucratic degeneration it abandoned the transitional program and regressed to the old minimum (day to day achievable reforms) and maximum (some vision of organization in an unspecified socialist future) demands of the Second International (AKA the Socialist International) expressed in reformism and sectarianism, just as social democracy had done decades previously.

The responsibility of building the revolutionary socialist consciousness rested upon the shoulders of the Left Opposition of the communist movement after this degeneration, and then later the Fourth International founded in 1938 when it was clear the Third was beyond salvation.

The transitional programme is the only method which can build a socialist consciousness in the working class and create a bridge, as Trotsky described it between the current consciousness of the majority of workers and the final conclusion of the class struggle, that a socialist revolution is necessary to save humanity from capitalism. It is of paramount importance for a revolutionary party to have a correct method to build a revolutionary socialist consciousness in the working class, otherwise there will be no overthrow of capitalism and the transformation to socialism.

Crisis does not result automatically in revolution. Imperialism (highest form of monopolistic capital) reached a most destructive phase in the 1930s and developed into the most murderous and bloody world slaughter which ended in the industrial extermination of an entire people and mass murder through the use of atomic weapons. Yet despite the huge desire among the masses in Europe and Asia for socialism, their misleaders helped prop up imperialism and throw consciousness backwards with a massive anti-communist propaganda onslaught.

Trotsky was clear that if capitalism survived the Second World War it would see a new lease of life for world imperialism and would eventually lead to the Third World War.[1] Today US imperialism dominates the planet, it has no equal and is entering its most predatory and destructive phase, as happened with German imperialism in the 1930s. The US has in its sights the semi-oppressed nations of Russia, China, Iran, Syria and North Korea.

The next world war could quickly escalate into a thermo-nuclear conflict and destroy humanity. Therefore the need for socialist revolution is paramount. The importance of developing transitional demands is precisely because the working class as a product of bourgeois society has a false consciousness when compared with the objective situation. Kautsky when he was the main theoretician of Marxism in the second international and Lenin following him explained that a socialist consciousness comes to workers from without, that is to say it is introduced and taught to workers from the intelligentsia, bourgeois intellectuals from outside the working class. [2]

These intellectuals such as Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky

develop theory. The vanguard workers then learn, and develop as worker intellectuals and train other vanguard workers. Trotsky explained how revolutionaries are distinct to others in the workers movement

In the final analysis, revolutionaries are made of the same social stuff as other people. But they must have had certain very different personal qualities to enable the historical process to separate them from the rest into a distinct group. Association with one another, theoretical work, the struggle under a definite banner, collective discipline, the hardening under the fire of danger, these things gradually shape the revolutionary type. [3]

Whole sections of the class however lag in consciousness in comparison to the objective conditions and hence the necessity for a transitional programme. We must however be patient explaining and helping to develop the consciousness of the workers to connect with the objective conditions. In no way should this mean however that we should appeal to the lowest common denominator of workers consciousness, tail ending populist petty bourgeois public opinion and jumping on the latest political bandwagon. Trotsky explained:

"The mentality in general is backward or delayed, in relation to the economic development.... This delay can be short or long. In normal times when the development is slow, in a long line, this delay cannot produce catastrophic results. To a great extent this delay signifies that the workers are not equal to the tasks put before them by objective conditions; but in times of crisis this delay may be catastrophic." [4]

How should transitional demands be formulated?

The Transitional Programme is not therefore a list of reforms all at once aimed at nothing thought up by a small group running a sect, and is not policies handed down from an enlightened 'Socialist' government in response to left demands. It must be a fighting program, hitting the base and structure of capitalist society, directing workers to take control of the material world and destroy the capitalist state, they would then need a new program to guide them using the material they control and can then build socialism through the workers' state, the transitional program 'brings the reader only to the doorstep' of socialism. [5] Hence the original 'Transitional Programme' was a draft for the period it was written in and not to be used as a Gospel as some sects do.

Class consciousness is not static and is not homogeneous in all sections of the working class at the same time. Only a minority will of course have a developed class consciousness of the Marxist understanding of human social relations. The majority of the working class will develop a common set of interests to fight for and overcome, they will not develop a socialist consciousness or a higher class consciousness as the vanguard of the class does which is expressed in the revolutionary party. It is therefore necessary to develop a set of demands they can fight around and which present to them a resolution of the problems faced under capitalism. So despite the diversity in consciousness and the many other differences between workers which are fostered by capitalist ideologues, the demands if they resonate with a desire and confidence of the class to fight for them can help to unite the working class. Trotsky in a polemic against a

French leftist intellectual illustrated how the moods of the masses are varied and can change and only revolutionary strategy can develop their struggle:

"Victory is not at all the ripe fruit of the proletariat's 'maturity'. Victory is a strategical task. It is necessary to utilize in order to mobilise the masses; taking as a starting point the given level of their 'maturity' it is necessary to propel them forward, teach them to understand that the enemy is by no means omnipotent, that it is torn asunder with contradictions,"[6]

The demands tackle the solutions to the objective circumstances with an embryo of socialist organization of society. The demands themselves while addressed as the solutions to the crisis of capitalism cannot be fully implemented through the capitalist state and therefore even if attempted partially can only finally be achieved through conquest of power by the working class. It encourages the working class to go further, even if the capitalists and the state are forced to give partial reform then further demands must be made especially as it becomes apparent that the capitalist state and the trade union and reformist labour leaders will not go further attacking the base of capitalism, a wall will be met.

That is how the bridge from today's understanding by the working class and the revolutionary consciousness of tomorrow is built. As Trotsky described the program as 'an instrument to vanquish and overcome the backwardness'. [7] Knowing when and which demands to use at a particular time is important for revolutionaries. We do not present a whole list of demands all at once and always the same for years on end (as the SPEW does), the demands can change depending on circumstance, the symptoms of capitalist crisis at a given time and level of struggle by the working class. However the demands must always be addressed as a solution to the objective conditions under capitalism, after all the understanding of the working class can alter quickly 'under the blows of objective crisis'. [8]

One way is to put the demands into easily memorable and understood slogans, which Trotsky described as 'the program of socialism but in a very popular and simple form'. [9] As we have said we must build on the demands the more success and penetration of the demands among the masses is achieved and their implementation until the point is reached where the working class understands and follows the revolutionary leadership to overthrow the capitalist state.

Slogans and Demands

When the original draft program was written in 1938 the situation in terms of symptomatic expressions of the capitalist crisis differ to that of today, some of course remain the same such as the threat of world war. We cannot therefore use the same slogans as were used then. Trotsky drew up a 'Program of Action for France' when he resided there. This is one of the best examples of transitional demands and included the following:

Forty-hour week, wage increases. Workers' control will demonstrate that the level of productive forces permits the reduction of the working day. Wage increases at the expense of the magnates of the Comite des Forges, of the Comite des Houilleres, of the Finlays, the Schneiders and the Staviskys, and to the material and moral advantage of the labouring people.

Real social security and, first of all, unemployment insurance. Annual vacation of at least one month. Retirement pensions permitting one to live after fifty years of age.



Equal wages for equal work. Abolition of the super exploitation imposed on women, young people, aliens and colonials.

For working women, the same wages and same rights as for working men. Maternity protection with supplementary leaves of absence.

For young people, wages equal to adults. Extension of study and apprenticeship at the collective expense. Special hygienic measures.

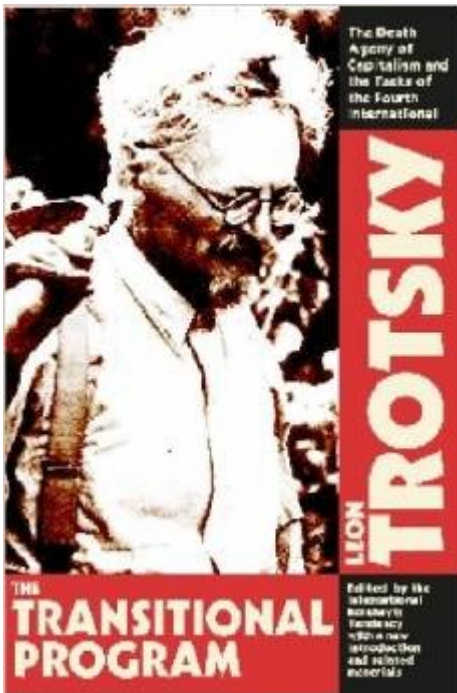
Repeal of all special legislation applying to foreign and colonial workers.[10]

France was in the grips of the capitalist crisis at this time and sections of the capitalist ruling class had attempted a fascist coup, only social revolution could have bought these demands then. Instead there was world war and then the capitalist upturn as there had been in the late 19th century which meant social reforms could be introduced, but today we are in crisis once again and the gains are gone or being eroded in the imperialist countries.

Some of the basic demands are the same though. Observing current struggles is important to develop demands and slogans, as they must resonate with the masses. For example there are currently various movements based on occupations including among poorer sections of the working class such as the E15 Mothers which have taken on the problems created by capitalism which have impoverished them. Occupations have always been an important part of class struggle for workers under capitalism and is also in the original Transitional Programme concerning factory occupations.

Today we could raise the demand for the occupation of empty properties to be given to families who need them and become cooperatives with public funding, or something similar, the final demands must be reached through discussion. In the labour movement demands could find wide appeal on the left and be aimed at Labour leaders and especially Labour governments.

In the present time demands for a return to union rights which have been eroded by Tory employment acts and taxing the rich to pay for public services would find wide support, and if the rich threaten to move their wealth abroad we should demand trade exchange controls and leading from that the demand for open and transparent accounting of all finance in the country and global trade and their wealth prevented from moving. The Labour leaders can no longer even promise to nationalize utilities, so even demanding this would run up against the capitalist state, however capitalist nationalization is not the answer, the demand should be the nationalization under committees of workers and consumers control and management without capitalists.



If a demand such as this were to take on mass support in the labour movement and it became clear the leaders would betray it, which even under a left wing leadership would be the case for the reformists, and then the call for occupation of the utilities could be made. The same would be made for the banks, the demand could be made for the total appropriation of the banks and finance institutions by the state under

workers' control, in contrast to Brown's buying of the banks with tax payers money like he did with RBS and Northern Rock to bailout the capitalists in 2008.

There is a wide desire for decent public services even among more backward workers, but also distrust of government and big business of which public services are also seen as part of or under the influence of. Therefore demands for public services without unrepresentative governments and big capitalists, would find a hearing among workers and this could develop into the understanding that we could run public services if we occupy them and make them ours. This is transcending the capitalist state and property relations.

When a revolutionary situation does develop and dual power becomes a prospect we must call on the working class and their organisations to take power from the capitalist state, as the Bolsheviks did in 1917, which exposed the political cowardice and impotence of the other parties who claimed to lead the working class such as the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries. We would also expose the cowardice of the official labour and trade union leaders.

We must challenge the illusions in the capitalist state and the faith in bourgeois democracy especially by reformist workers, we must explain and expose how undemocratic it has become, which most workers know to a degree already. We could appeal to the memory of the Chartists and call for reforms that capitalism could never concede. Trotsky did this in the '*Programme of Action for France*', in which he appealed to reformist socialists to be faithful to 'the ideas and methods not of the Third Republic but of the Convention of 1793'[11] and called for 'A single assembly' to 'combine the legislative and executive powers.' [12]

A similar demand could be made for Britain today, with abolition of the Lords and the Monarchy and election of Prime Minister and cabinet by the chamber. We could add that MPs earn the average of their constituents, how many right wing Labour MPs would there be then? Also the defence of Human Rights which are currently being eroded will find wide understanding. The improvement and protection of unemployment, housing and disability benefits is also an important demand and links to the question of who controls the wealth, and how it

should be spent to pick up the devastating effects of capitalism.

Internationalism: Challenging the social chauvinists

Socialism cannot be created in one country, it must be international; the struggle of workers against capitalism is worldwide. The defeat of world imperialism of the USA and the NATO block is of major importance. Therefore we must always agitate for solidarity with workers in struggle in other nations and national liberation struggles.

As we are close again to world war we must warn the masses of the danger and demand the dismantling of NATO and the other military alliances protecting the interests of the US dollar. In Britain the call for nuclear disarmament can also be linked to how public money is spent and how it can be put to socially useful projects if workers could have control of public finance.

As can a call to withdraw all troops from foreign occupation, including Ireland and linked to this the freeing of all Irish political prisoners and prisoners. The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq met with mass opposition. If such a situation were to develop into a revolutionary crisis then we would begin calling for trade union rights for the ranks of the army we could raise the demand for the election of officers but only when the soldiers are mutinous during a revolutionary crisis, not in peacetime.

Conclusion

The transitional programme is not and cannot be set in stone and used as a Gospel of some kind. It must be developed through as wide a discussion as possible, taking into account the struggles of the day and consider and the objective situation and how it develops. Demands stemming from these struggles can gain an immediate understanding among workers. They must be developed in the course of struggle, building from one to another. The demands must however be a solution to capitalist crisis which must in the final analysis pose to the working class that it can only be solved by the action of the class taking power and transcending capitalist property relations. The programme can then be a bridge from the struggle today to the socialist revolution of tomorrow.

Notes

- [1] Leon Trotsky, "The World situation and Perspectives", Writing of Leon Trotsky (1939-40) (Merit Publishers, 1969), pp 23-24
- [2] V.I. Lenin, "Dogmatism and 'Freedom of Criticism'", What is to be done? Burning questions of our movement (New York, International Publishers, 1986), pp 39-41
- [3] Leon Trotsky, "Lenin's death and the shift of power", My Life: An attempt at an autobiography, 1930, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1930/mylife/ch41.htm>
- [4] Leon Trotsky, "Discussion on the Transitional Program", Writings of Leon Trotsky (1939-1940), (Merit Publishers, 1969), p 43
- [5] Leon Trotsky, "More Discussion on the Transitional Program", Writings of Leon Trotsky (1939-1940) (Merit Publishers, 1969), p49
- [6] Leon Trotsky, The Class, the Party and the Leadership, (Cambridge Heath Press, 1982) p6
- [7] Leon Trotsky, "Discussion on the Transitional Program", Writings of Leon Trotsky (1939-1940) (Merit Publishers, 1969), p43
- [8] Ibid, p44
- [9] Ibid
- [10] Leon Trotsky, "A Program of Action for France", (1934), <http://www.marxist.org/archive/Trotsky/1934/06/paf.htm#n22>
- [11] Leon Trotsky, "A Program of Action for France", (1934), <http://www.marxist.org/archive/Trotsky/1934/06/paf.htm#n22>
- [12] ibid

For a Revolutionary Intervention in the Forthcoming Elections:

Statement of the Workers Revolutionary Party (EEK) of Greece

Note by Permanent Revolution (US, Permanent Revolution by Alex Steiner and Frank Brenner, <http://forum.permanent-revolution.org/>):

We are publishing the election manifesto of the Workers Revolutionary Party of Greece (EEK). We believe this is an important statement that should be studied and discussed by all those working towards a socialist resolution of the crisis of capitalism. Greece has become the epicenter of that crisis and the fate of Greece could very well determine the fate of Europe and of the world for decades to come. While Greece is a relatively small country with a relatively small economy compared for example, to Spain or Italy, it has the potential to show the way forward to others. And this is a historic moment in Greece as there is every indication that a party of the Left – SYRIZA – (an acronym for the ‘Party of the Radical Left’), will win the elections for parliament on Jan 25. As the EEK statement points out, SYRIZA will not be able to meet the expectations of those who will be voting for it. We believe that the EEK’s approach, seeking to join in a common struggle with the masses who see in SYRIZA – an alternative to the austerity measures of successive Center Left and Center Right governments, while patiently explaining the limitations of SYRIZA, is fundamentally right. EEK’s decision to field its own candidates independent of those groups on the left who have made common cause with nationalists of the Left and the Right is also welcome.

That being said, our posting of the EEK’s election statement doesn’t mean we agree with every aspect of the party’s program. The statement makes a formally correct warning about the dangers of a Chile-style counterrevolution in the wake of a powerless left government. This is a real danger but it is by no means a pre-determined outcome. What is troubling here is the tone of the statement and its implicit message: SYRIZA will betray, the other left groups will adapt opportunistically to this betrayal, the bourgeoisie and the overlords of European capital will hatch their plots, and it will all end badly for the aspirations of the Greek masses. But this leaves those masses out of the picture, renders them passive observers. Revolutionary socialists should welcome the prospects of a SYRIZA government, not because there should be any illusions in the capacity of SYRIZA to “negotiate” their way out of the crisis, but because a SYRIZA government will provide a new experience for the working class, making possible rapid advances in consciousness and the possibilities that such advances open up for the building of a genuine revolutionary leadership. The job of revolutionaries is to go through this experience with the masses by putting demands on SYRIZA that can rally mass support. A long time ago this used to be known, in the international Trotskyist movement, as the ‘transitional method’. It seems to us that most parties that call themselves Trotskyist today have lost sight of that approach. But while the EEK shares the problems facing all revolutionary groups today, it is making a serious effort to think through the practical and theoretical problems of what is to be done when one is a small group facing an important historical turning point. This is a refreshing contrast to the numerous sterile sects who think that revolutionary strategy consists in proclaiming themselves the only revolutionary party on the planet while denouncing everyone else.

We made stylistic changes from the original translation to facilitate a smoother reading experience while leaving the content unchanged. We have also added notes to the document in order to explain references that might not be familiar to an English speaking audience. We have adapted the translation originally published by the EEK in their online publication:

<http://www.eek.gr/index.php/englishtext/3110-for-a-revolutionary-intervention-in-the-forthcoming-elections>



Resolution of EEK in the Extraordinary Conference

(Intro) Dec 28th 2014

1. 1. The country’s economic bankruptcy and social disintegration led to the most acute crisis of political power. The collapsing Samaras-Venizelos government tied to the troika’s [1] Memoranda can no longer govern; and a successor SYRIZA-based government is not a viable option, neither for the ruling class or the masses that are likely to vote for them.

Samaras’ headlong rush with the attempted termination of the Memorandum and his failed “success story” rhetoric ended in a tragicomedy. [2] The troika, and above all the IMF itself and Schäuble [3] pulled the rug from under the feet of the Samaras/Venizelos government by demanding a new and devastating series of measures be enacted against the people of Greece, thereby accelerating the timetable for the presidential election and early parliamentary elections. There is no doubt that the troika’s ultimatum had as its final recipient not the departing right-wing prime minister, but the left-wing government that is likely to follow. The cynical EU blackmail is clear: either SYRIZA will capitulate to their austerity measures, disappointing popular expectations and losing its base of support or it will be crushed by the “markets”. This expected chain of events in turn is supposed to send a message to Podemos [4] in Spain and Ireland’s Sinn Féin’s. [5]

On the EU side, there is no room for compromise either. The Union is sinking into recession, over-indebtedness, deflation and the systemic crisis of capitalist that is radiating from the periphery but now threatens its inner core: Italy, France and Germany itself. On the other hand, the right-wing political subordination to the Troika and capital have squeezed the Greek working class and the middle class below even a minimal level of subsistence. The politics of SYRIZA – to reduce austerity through negotiation and compromise with the EU, the IMF, international and Greek capital – cannot be realized given the objective limitations imposed by the worsening crisis of capitalism.

The forces of right wing reaction are preparing for the confrontation, strengthening their positions in the state, the para-state, the repressive, judicial, and ideological apparatuses and fascist gangs to turn a SYRIZA government into a “left parenthesis”, a phantom government without any real power, before the extreme right-wing returns with a revanchist social counter-revolution.

The upcoming elections are undoubtedly a crucial episode in the new phase of the class struggle. However, whatever the election result may be, it is certain that it will not solve but rather further exacerbate the crisis of political power and, finally, the crisis of class rule. The ruling capitalists are unable to lead society out of their system’s crisis. Only the working class, supported by the masses that the crisis is currently destroying, can provide a way out of the crisis, organizing the exit from the system, from domination by the bourgeoisie and imperialism, toward international socialism in the region, in Europe, and worldwide....

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Sex Work: Client criminalisation only leads to worse violence

By Niki Adams, English Collective of Prostitutes

For years sex workers, burdened by stigma and discrimination, found it hard to speak and organise in our own name. This has started to change and a recent example shows how effective campaigns spearheaded by sex workers can be.

In November last year, Fiona Mactaggart MP tried to introduce legislation to criminalise men who buy sex. Her amendment to the *Modern Slavery Bill* to make “procuring sex for payment” illegal initially had cross-party support. Seven days later after a lively and intense campaign which elicited support from a wide range of organisations and individuals, the tide had turned against Mactaggart to such an extent that she was forced to withdraw the amendment.

Hundreds of individuals and organisations responded to a plea from the English Collective of Prostitutes and lobbied MPs to oppose the amendment. Hampshire Women’s Institute, Women Against Rape and the Royal College of Nursing were three notable groups that lent their name to the campaign.

People drew heavily on information provided by the ECP but many added detailed and concrete examples from their own experience. Safety was a primary concern. Sex workers in particular described how criminalising clients would make it more dangerous and stigmatising to work. Some gave examples of how existing kerb-crawling legislation, that criminalises men who solicit for sex on the street, robbed them of the time to check out clients, negotiate what services they would provide, forced them to work in more isolated areas and caused them to work harder and take more risks to make the same money:

“To avoid the police, clients drive by and signal to follow them into a side street. As soon as I get to the car I have to jump in. You get no chance to see who it is that is driving, I can’t really see his face, or check if he is drunk. I have to just hurry up and get in before the police come.”

Various studies, including 2014 research in Canada, found that criminalizing clients meant:



Protesters outside Sheila Farmer’s court case, January 2012

“Sex workers had to rush screening clients and were displaced to outlying areas with increased risks of violence, including being forced to engage in unprotected sex.”

When clients on the street in Scotland were criminalised in October 2007, the number of assaults on sex workers soared. [1] Some women describe being cornered and threatened with arrest by police unless they “go get us a client”. Marianna Popa was murdered in Ilford on 28 October 2013[2] in the wake of a police crackdown which resulted in over 200 “prostitute cautions” being issued to women in the area over the last year, and many arrests for loitering and soliciting. Afterwards, senior police officers voiced concerns that “operations to tackle the trade are ‘counterproductive’ and likely to put the lives of women at risk. [3]

There is no disagreement that sex workers suffer high levels of rape and other violence. Sheila Farmer, who bravely went public to campaign described her experience:

“I worked alone. Within months, I was attacked, raped repeatedly, tied up, held hostage, and nearly strangled. I gave evidence against my attacker but he got off. I suffered years of nightmares and panic attacks.”

But what caused outrage among sex workers in particular was the claim by those promoting a “sex purchase law” that prostitution is violence. Conflating the two implies that sex workers don’t know the difference between consenting sex and rape. Women Against Rape objected that criminalizing clients would “divert police time and resources away from reported rapes and sexual assaults.”[4] Considering that two women a week are killed by their partner or former partner; the question was asked whether marriage be banned?

Some sex workers described graphically how the existing laws undermine safety by forcing them to work in isolation and made it harder for women to report rape and other violence. [5] After she was attacked Ms Farmer vowed never to work alone but consequently she fell foul of the brothel-keeping law. She was charged with brothel-keeping. With the ECP she successfully campaigned to stop the prosecution. The ECP has also fought a number of cases [6] where women reported serious attacks to the police and were themselves prosecuted or threatened with prosecution while their attackers went free. District judge Nigel Richardson, who in his capacity as a solicitor defended Ms Farmer and many other sex workers, based his objections to a sex purchase law on his knowledge of the enormous lengths that sex workers go to to keep themselves safe. He also help-



Protest against the closure of flats in Soho where sex workers work in relative safety

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fully listed the existing laws that can be used against exploitation and violence. [7]

The amendment to the Modern Slavery Bill claimed to be modelled on a law introduced in 1999 in Sweden which alongside criminalizing clients, decriminalized sex workers on the street. Inevitably then, the success or failure of the Swedish legislation was a central question. Mactaggart claimed that the Swedish law “has been shown to reduce sex trafficking” yet produced no evidence to support this. In contrast, the Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women’s 2011 research that found “criminalising sex workers’ clients does not reduce sex work or trafficking. Instead, it infringes on sex workers’ rights and obstructs anti-trafficking efforts.”[8]

False claims about trafficking have been used before to justify a crackdown on prostitution including by Mactaggart, who for years pedalled the now discredited figure that “80% of women in prostitution are controlled by traffickers”. [9]

In reality anti-trafficking legislation is primarily being used to target immigrant sex workers for raids and deportations. During well publicised raids on Soho flats last year, done in the name of freeing victims of trafficking, 250 police broke down doors and dragged handcuffed immigrant women in their underwear onto the streets.

Considering that “internationally only 22% of human trafficking is for sexual exploitation”, [10] creating fair working conditions and ending abuses in low-wage labour industries will ultimately do far more to end trafficking in persons and protect the human rights of workers in vulnerable situations.

Evidence that the Swedish law has increased stigma and discrimination came firstly from sex workers in Sweden who were never consulted when the law was introduced:

“We are still criminalised if we work together in premises, we risk eviction by landlords, condemnation by social workers and even losing custody of our kids because we are seen as ‘bad girls’ unwilling to change. This law should be abolished not exported to other countries.”[11]

Thirty academics wrote to MPs listing research which documented the detrimental impact of the law. [12]

Health professionals, many of whom do outreach work with sex workers on the street and in premises, objected to the amendment based on their concrete experience of seeing how criminalisation blocks access to health services. This was confirmed by the Lancet which recently came out for the decriminalisation of sex work saying: “. . . sex workers face substantial barriers in accessing prevention, treatment, and care services, largely because of stigma, discrimination, and criminalisation.”[13]

LGBT groups objected on the grounds that consenting sex should not be a crime. [14] They pointed to the decriminalisation of gay sex in England in the 1960s and asked why consenting sex where money is exchanged should continue to be criminalised.

Many objected to a “sex purchase” law being presented as a “gender equality” measure when feminist politicians have allied themselves with homophobic fundamentalist Christians, who



Briefing for MPs against a proposed law to criminalise sex workers’ clients, December 2014

have spearheaded attacks on gay rights and oppose gay marriage, sex outside marriage and abortion. To its shame, an All-Party Parliamentary Group founded by Mactaggart chose as its secretariat the homophobic charity CARE. [15] Lord Morrow who introduced legislation in Northern Ireland to criminalise clients has a long history of opposing LGBT rights. [16]

Some also pointed to the discriminatory way that laws criminalising clients have been implemented in other countries for example, the US where Hispanic men and those living in low-income neighbourhoods are disproportionately targeted.

Some asked why when unemployment, benefit cuts and sanctions, lowering wages, increased homelessness, and debt are forcing more women, particularly mothers, into prostitution, the best that feminist MPs can come up with is to increase criminalisation. Are women less degraded when we have to skip meals, beg or stay with a violent partner to keep a roof over our heads?

Some mothers demanded support for their caring work to enable them to “exit” prostitution:

“I am the mother of a child with learning difficulties. To pay for the basics that most people take for granted, keeping warm, having decent food, replacing essential furniture, I have worked on street corners as a prostitute. Most of the other girls that I meet on the street are there to keep their families together; their children out of care. What I want is a little recognition. I’m not asking for the £1000 they would pay a stranger to do my job as a mother. Just a little of that money would have made my life and my daughter’s life much easier and I could have got off that street corner.”

Mactaggart also claimed that “prostitution is an extreme form of exploitation.” Sex workers countered this with their experience of other jobs, many of which were also exploitative and even dangerous.

“I was fed up of being a cleaner, bar maid and shop assistant, often all on the same day. Prostitution is certainly not the worst job I have ever had. I have worked on the fish market and as a cleaner where I was working for people who didn’t care if we were cold or tired or how we were spoken to.”

No-one would sensibly suggest that working in a fish market be banned. Campaigns by trade unions to address exploitation in other jobs have focussed on empowering workers to insist on their rights. Some trade unionists support the right of sex workers to join a trade union, “to fight for pay terms and conditions like every other worker and even to lodge grievances at tribunals, if they have been badly treated by their employers.” Yet many trade unions, with the notable exception of the GMB and CWU, have remained silent or have supported increased criminalization.

Sex Work: No client criminalisation

John McDonnell MP, our staunch supporter, co-ordinated opposition to Mactaggart's amendment within parliament. His masterful speech during the debate referenced the contribution of campaigners and he concluded:

"I am fundamentally opposed to [the] new clause, because it is worrying, counter-productive and dangerous... the answer is not to criminalise any of their activities, but to tackle the underlying cause by not cutting welfare benefits and ensuring people have an affordable roof over their heads and giving them access to decent, paid employment... We must listen to sex workers."

The Labour front bench did not back Mactaggart's amendment – one sure sign of the success of our lobbying.

New Zealand's successful decriminalization is increasingly being seen as a model for the UK. The 2003 Prostitution Reform Act removed prostitution from the criminal law, allowed people to work together collectively, and distinguished between violence and consenting sex. It reinforced offences against compelling anyone into prostitution, stating a specific right for sex workers to refuse any client. A comprehensive five year review found: no increase in prostitution, and that sex workers were more able to report violence and leave prostitution if they choose. [17]

The English Collective of Prostitutes is following up on the success of this campaign by issuing a pledge for decriminalization for organizations and prominent individuals to sign. As the election approaches, we want decriminalisation on the agenda of every political party. We need your support for this as well as for our fight for occupational health and safety and against the cuts which impoverish us and propel us into prostitution.

Sign the Pledge

The English Collective of Prostitutes is an organisation of sex workers and former sex workers working in all areas of the sex industry – on the street and indoors. We campaign for the decriminalisation of prostitution so that we can work together for safety. We also campaign against poverty and for financial alternatives to prostitution. The ECP is often referred to as the 'Girls Union' and we do similar work trade unionists do – fighting cases with people against police harassment, arrests and raids.

Notes

- [1] The Scotsman, 18 April, 2008
- [2] <http://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/man-hunt-on-after-woman-24-is-stabbed-to-death-in-east-london-street-8921788.html>
- [3] <http://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/jan/19/woman-killed-prostitute-police-blame>
- [4] <http://prostitutescollective.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/WAR-Modern-Slavery-Bill-Briefing.pdf>
- [5] Silence on Violence, Andrew Boff, March 2012
- [6] <http://prostitutescollective.net/tag/barking/>
- [7] <http://prostitutescollective.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/06388373.pdf>



Candlelit march protesting violence and police raids against sex workers, December 2014

- [8] http://www.gaaw.org/advocacy/Bill_C-36-GAATW_brief.pdf
- [9] For example, for Solicitor General, Vera Baird MP, Women's Hour, 15 January 2008. The figure derives from a report (Sex in the City, 2004) by the Poppy Project which found that 80% of women working in "brothels, saunas and massage parlours" in London were "non British nationals" and concluded (without evidence) that "a large proportion of them are likely to have been trafficked into the country". This research was condemned as having "serious methodological limitations" by Prof. Julia O'Connell Davidson (A Question of Consent? Sexual Slavery and Sex Work in the UK, 2009).
- [10] ILO, 2012
- [11] Carina Edlund, Rose Alliance, Sweden 2014.
- [12] <http://prostitutescollective.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Mod-Slavery-Bill-letter-from-academics-1.pdf>
- [13] <http://www.thelancet.com/series/HIV-and-sex-workers>
- [14] <http://prostitutescollective.net/2013/09/09/3171/>
- [15] <http://www.care.org.uk/news/impact-direct/blind-to-opposition-government-set-to-introduce-bill-to-legalise-same-sex-marriage>
- [16] He is one of three Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) Lords. The DUP In 1977, Ian Paisley, Lord Morrow's close friend, launched the "Save Ulster From Sodomy" campaign to prevent the decriminalisation of homosexuality. In 2007, Lord Morrow tabled an amendment to scrap laws banning businesses from discriminating against gay people
- [17] <http://www.justice.govt.nz/policy/commercial-property-and-regulatory/prostitution/prostitution-law-review-committee/publications/plrc-report/documents/report.pdf>

Decriminalisation of sex work would:

- Increase safety - sex workers could work together and report violence without fear of arrest.
- Enhance health - sex workers could access services without discrimination.
- Recognise sex workers as workers with rights to fight for better working conditions and wages.
- Free police time and resources to tackle violent crimes like rape, trafficking and racist attacks.
- Protect immigrant sex workers from being targeted for raids and deportation.
- Recognise that sex workers, mostly mothers, contribute to the survival of families and communities.
- End criminal records which bar access to other jobs.
- Reduce police corruption enabling sex workers to report wrongdoings.
- Stop the government profiteering from fines and confiscation orders.
- Help end the hypocritical stigma attached to sex work.

I support decriminalisation of sex work.

Signed

Date

Issued by the Safety First Coalition, co-ordinated by the English Collective of Prostitutes, which includes anti-poverty campaigners, women's groups, church people, residents from red-light areas, members of the medical & legal professions, prison and drug law reformers.
ecp@prostitutescollective.net, 020 7482 2496.

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The new US-Cuba agreement and the struggle in defence of the workers' state

After 18 months of secret talks between the US and Cuba, mediated by Canada and Pope Francis, the two countries held the first gestures of rapprochement in half a century with the release of prisoners that both countries kept from the other. But ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States on Cuba depends on the US Congress, which must vote on the end of the Torricelli and Helms-Burton laws. However, those who defend the blockade are the majority of both houses of Congress.

The imperialist state is composed of different fractions of the American bourgeoisie. So, despite their importance, they are social minorities, minor counterrevolutionaries, like Zionism (not to be mechanically confused with Judaism) and the 'worms' (*gusanos* as Fidel Castro called them, the Cuban capitalist counterrevolutionary that fled mainly to Miami when he took power) in the US which maximizes bourgeois deformations of representation in imperialist policy. For example, Blacks are 13% of the American population, but every cop has the right to strangle and kill an unarmed poor black man, according to the justice of the richest city in America. The Zionists and the 'worms' are partners of the richest 1%, but just like Zionism, these reactionaries may impose its orientation on the White House on certain issues crucial to their interests. Therefore, the overthrow of the imperialist legislative blockade will not be possible while the bourgeoisie reactionaries dominate the right wing of Republicanism. However, we have no doubt that it was the majority consensus of imperialism of the need to contain the influence of Russia and China in Latin America which was brought to bear on the executive and led Obama to make this agreement.

Because of the turn of events in Syria, regions of Ukraine and to a lesser extent worldwide semi-colonialism it was time for Cuba to take advantage of new global correlation of forces created after the crisis of 2008 and the rise of a block of countries orientating towards China and Russia who were also taking advantage of the decline of American imperialism.

CUBAN EXCEPTIONALISM

The Cuban revolution marked a turn in the history of the twentieth century in Latin America. In addition to defeating a pro-US dictatorship in Uncle Sam's backyard, for the first time in the Western Hemisphere capitalism was expropriated. This allowed a small island with less than a dozen million people to escape the fate of an agricultural colony subservient to the US to proudly show to its population and the world its unprecedented achievements like the elimination of hunger and poverty, an educational system. Its excellent health and medical advances are exported to the rest of oppressed humanity.

Cuba became a workers' state after the overthrow of the dictator Fulgencio Batista and the seizure of power by the movement's guerrilla army on July 26 in 1959. The revolutionary process at first did not have a socialist strategy. Its aims was only the achievement of democratic capitalist tasks such as the end of the dictatorial regime and agrarian reform.

But amid the cold war against the USSR the revolutionary process threw a spotlight on the contradictions between the tiny island and imperialism. It was only when imperialism tried to invade the island in the Bay of Pigs in April 1960 to defeat the



Cuba became a workers' state after the overthrow of the dictator Fulgencio Batista and the seizure of power by the movement's guerrilla army on July 26 in 1959.

new regime that the direction of the revolutionary movement of Castro and Ché was finally to complete the expropriation of the multinationals. Then the entire capitalist class departed in droves for Florida. From that time on the 'worms' (rats), as they came to be known, have integrated themselves organically with imperialism and had been determining US policy on Cuba up to now.

This type of overthrow was a definite theoretical possibility recognized by Trotsky in the Transition Program of 1938:

"However, one cannot categorically deny in advance the theoretical possibility that, under the influence of completely exceptional circumstances (war, defeat, financial crash, mass revolutionary pressure, etc.), the petty-bourgeois parties, including the Stalinists, may go further than they themselves wish to a break with the bourgeoisie. In any case, one thing is not to be doubted: even if this highly improbable variant somewhere, at some time, becomes a reality and the workers' and farmers' government in the above-mentioned sense is established in fact, it would represent merely a short episode on the road to the actual dictatorship of the proletariat."

In the Cuban case, the "short episode" lasted between 1959 and 1961. The direction of that Castro's M-26-7 took involved empirically revolutionary measures, but almost always under imperialist pressure. Che himself, who historically represented the internationalist wing of the Cuban Government, recognizes that the radicalization of the revolution was more conditioned by the imperialist pressure than the socialist convictions of its leaders:

"What lies ahead depends greatly on the United States. With the exception of the agrarian reform, which the people of Cuba desired and initiated themselves, all of our radical measures have been a direct response to direct aggressions by powerful monopolists of which your country is the chief exponent. US pressure on Cuba has made necessary the 'radicalisation' of the revolution. To know how much further Cuba will go, it will be easier to ask the US government how far it plans to go." *La Nación*, 6/9/1961).

The Cuban revolution, which was never directed by a revolutionary party, was bureaucratized by its own internal limitations. This process of bureaucratization worsened when the fragile island needed material assistance and appeal to the workers' state of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the USSR. But soon the

principle and the policy of “peaceful coexistence” of Stalinism showed young direction of Cuban State how their Russian allies were unreliable. Che was disillusioned with the USSR government during the Cuban missile crisis in 1962, because he felt ‘betrayed’ by Moscow who withdrew their armament from Cuba without warning to the Cuban Government, capitulating US pressure.

THE BLOCKADE AND THE END OF THE USSR FORCED THE BUREAUCRACY TO PRESERVE THE CUBAN WORKERS STATE FOR THEIR OWN SURVIVAL

The policy of isolation and blockade imposed by imperialism from 1962 exercised a powerful counter revolutionary pressure for decades under exceptional condition and that forced Castro to take an oppositional stance in order to defend the new forms of property relations established by the expropriation of the bourgeoisie and imperialism.

For us only the dialectic of these special circumstances explains how being a workers’ state that was weaker than the USSR and China, for example, and as for a long time depending on these “mega workers’ states”, Cuba managed to survive the demise of its sponsors.

These are the elements of these contradictions demonstrated by the following features:

- 1) Cuba is a workers’ state that didn’t arise from the actions of industrial workers;
- 2) It is the workers’ state which is geographically closest to the hard core of world imperialism;
- 3) It is economically the most fragile and when the USSR collapsed and abandoned it it was at its weakest;
- 4) In proportion to its fragility Cuba made the biggest effort in the international arena in Africa and in Latin America, without getting any immediate strategic profit for their efforts, but using it as element of resistance against the pressure of imperialism.
- 6) To influence mass movements in Latin America the Castro bureaucracy needed to abandon part of the Stalinist bureaucracy’s nationalism;
- 7) The role of the Cuban bourgeois ‘worms’, as an organic component of imperialism, it is disproportionate to its economic weight fraction as a bourgeois class.
- 8) Thus, among all workers’ states the Castroite bureaucratic was forced to confront imperialism far more than any other and had to rely on the masses far more because of the threat of imperialism.

In a way, and to a certain extent, and these exceptional circumstances, above all by the blockade imposed for more than half a century, prevented the capitalist restoration processes developing gradually and peacefully in Cuba and North Korea (as in China and Viet Nam). This is due to the fragility of these workers’ states who have to fight against imperialism and their respective bourgeois “worms” in Miami or South Korea. In these circumstances the restoration of capitalism could only occur through a civil war.

THE NEW COLD WAR AS A DECISIVE FACTOR THAT FORCED IMPERIALISM TO MAKE THE NEW US-CUBA AGREEMENT

However the new cold war saw a historic breakthrough and unprecedented influence from China and Russia on the whole of Latin America. The need to combat this favoured the imperi-



Alan Gross (L) greets Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), Sen. Jeff Flake (R-Az.), Rep. Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.) December 17, 2014, at an airport near Havana, Cuba. (Lawrence Jackson/The White House via Getty Images)

alist wing that was less influenced by the policy of isolation. They sought the path of co-optation as against the more reactionary isolationist Republican wing of the bourgeoisie. This opened up space for the current US-Cuba agreement, which however still keeps the essence of the policy of economic blockade which is unlikely to be seriously reviewed since it needs the approval of Congress where Republican influence grows with each election.

Obama’s speech was as illuminating as it was unexpected. He said it was:

“the most significant change in our policy in more than 50 years, we end up with an outdated approach that, for decades, has failed to boost our interests”.

The interests were and are the capitalist restoration in Cuba, which now will be favoured by increasing the flow of capital between the two countries, but also now such interests combine with the need to contain the advance of the capitalist Eurasian rival block, trying to mitigate the isolation that was caused when imperialism itself stepped in back in 1961.

This American representative recalls that “the relationship between our countries has developed on the background of the cold war and America’s firm opposition to communism”.

And during that conflict:

“Proudly, the United States supported democracy and human rights in Cuba throughout these five decades. We did it mainly through policies aimed at isolating the island, preventing the most basic travel and trade that Americans can enjoy anywhere else. And, although this policy was rooted in the best of intentions, no other nation joins us in the imposition of such sanctions, and so had little effect beyond providing the Cuban Government a justification for the restrictions on its people. Today, Cuba is still ruled by Castro and the Communist Party, which came to power half a century ago.”

While:

“for over 35 years, we have had relations with China – a much bigger country also ruled by a Communist Party. Nearly two decades ago, we restored relations with Viet Nam, where they fought a war that claimed more American lives than any confrontation of the cold war.”

I.e. the balance sheet that the White House makes is that the tactic that worked best was co-opting and not blocking.

Conversely, the cold war was won long before but even so capitalism was not restored in Cuba, thanks to the situation created by the United States. Then, in the face of the new cold war in which the United States is losing ground on the continent and in the world there is a need for a new tactic for Cuba, since, as he says “these 50 years have shown that the isolation hasn’t worked, it’s time for another attitude.”

As the WWSW website commented:

“Underlying this seeming contradiction is a definite logic, however. The move toward rapprochement with Cuba and the sanctions against Venezuela are different tactics that are directed toward the same aim: bringing to power pliant regimes prepared to more fully accept US semi-colonial domination. While much has been written about Obama’s “bold move,” the real driving forces behind a change in Cuba policy have been corporate and financial sectors that have seen a market they believe should be theirs being dominated by China, Spain and other countries.” WWSW After announcing “normalization” with Cuba, Obama slaps sanctions on Venezuela By Bill Van Auken, 20 December 2014, <http://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2014/12/20/cuba-d20.html>

The agreement for the exchange of prisoners and favouring the tourist exchange now made corresponds to a fourth step lived by the island since the crisis of rafters in the early 1990s (on 12 August 1994 Castro ordered the coastguards to prevent the departure of boats from Cuba. Rafters is the name given to the persons who emigrate illegally in self constructed or precarious vessels from Cuba. The Cuban Rafters, almost always disagree with communism and the Cuban government of the Castro Family, wiki.)

The first was when Cuba, which suffered more with the imperialist blockade after the end of the USSR, had managed to relieve the siege by winning concessions in particular from European imperialism and by the intercession of the Vatican since Pope John Paul II.

The second step was made possible by the process that began with the populist wave led by Chavez in Venezuela in the first decade of this century which exchanged oil for Cuban health services.

The third wave of this process occurred after the 2008 crisis and its epicentre was the USA. The port of Mariel is the fruit of this third step. Wikipedia informs us:

“Following an agreement reached in 2009 between the governments of Brazil and Cuba, the Brazilian engineering group Grupo Odebrecht built a new port, including a major container terminal, in partnership with the Cuban company “Zona de Desarrollo Integral de Mariel”, a subsidiary of the Cuban military controlled Almacenes Universal S.A. This project would have received an agreement from the Brazilian government to subsidize it up to US\$800 million, out of which \$300 million would have been already appropriated. The port has been dredged to 60 feet (18 m), enabling it to be used by Super-panamax vessels.”

This project will enormously enhance the advantages of the Eurasian block and especially of the Brazilian bourgeoisie in the Caribbean trade dispute. This port, combined with the new Atlantic-Pacific canal route via Nicaragua which is being built by China and the Pasadena oil refinery, purchased by Petrobras, the Brazilian multinational energy corporation, are part of an economic and infrastructural Eurasia block offensive against the decadent USA. This has stolen a march on big capital and fanned right reaction throughout the continent.



A shrimp boat returning from Mariel, Cuba, is packed with Cuban refugees as it lands at Florida’s Key West Naval Base on April 30, 1980.

These steps are confirmed in the current Cuban economic recovery:

“Since 2003 GDP has grown continuously until today according to the reports of ECLAC. In 2006 the economy grew by 12.6%, being the fastest growing in Latin America according to ECLAC that year. It grew by 7.6% in 2007 over the previous year. During the year 2009, ECLAC estimated a year on year increase in GDP of 1% compared to the year 2008 (despite the stock market Crisis of January 2008 from international involvement) “[3]”

The US desperately and urgently needs to reset the “Panamericanism” to inoculate the Americas against Russia and China. What the White House fears most is that the two countries will establish Cuba as the US Eurasian bloc representative of Russia and China, triggering off a new missile crisis.

The new “openness” front with Cuba was essential for the future of the mythological “recomposing of Panamericanism”. Besides trying to reassert its influence with the re-establishment of relations with their worst opponent on the mainland, while simultaneously deepens the sanctions against Russia, the United States knows that there is no “Panamericanism” without Brazil. Consequently pressure is being applied against the PT government who hosted the BRICS summit in mainland Latin America, to ensure that Brazil will be “secure” against the growing influence of Eurasian capitalism.

Argentina has structurally developed as a complementary economy with the United States and worse, in some commodities like cereals, is competitive with imperialism. The country, once again may be the weakest link of Panamericanism and that explains the unprecedented efforts of the core Russo-China orientation towards Argentina not only in the economic sense but also in the geostrategic sense.

The end of the blockade may release dammed tendencies. Cuba may initially take advantage of imperialist despair at not losing their own backyard, but Yankee capitalism will spare no efforts to devour the island and the new rich will graduate from the bureaucracy of the CP, as has already occurred in workers’ states where capitalism was restored. In this sense the growing sectors of bureaucracy are as eager to restore capitalism in Cuba as has already happened in the bourgeois regime in Viet Nam, or may result in new pro-imperialist Venezuela.

END OF THE LOCKOUT, THE RESTORATIONIST ROLE OF RELIGION AND THE REPEAL OF THE SPECIAL MEASURES

We believe that a progressive workers' state has to take advantage of the new cold war to end all reprisals taken against them for daring to have expropriated the multinationals and their bourgeoisie vassal. We argue that the blockade should be abandoned unconditionally. However, we also believe that the bureaucracy seeks to convert Cuba into a sort of Caribbean Viet Nam, as the imperialist blockade is suspended, or earlier if possible, i.e. the bureaucracy is taking advantage of the situation to favour the restorationist religion outlook and not socialism.

The tragicomic blockade did not result in the end of the workers' state. We denounce all secret diplomacy between the bureaucracy and US imperialism or any other capitalist nation. We fight for the progressive withdrawal of all measures implemented during the "special period" which were taken as special measure because of the dissolution of the USSR in 1991 and the increase of the embargo by the United States in 1992, as well as all subsequent measures that have weakened the planning of the economy, the monopoly of foreign trade and the nationalization of the means of production.

For a start we demand the return of full employment scheme and the repeal of all layoffs; the foreign investment law of 1995, the re-establishment of the monopoly of foreign trade, the full nationalization of all joint enterprises and production. In other words, if things are getting better is necessary to repeal the measures that have put the workers' state under pressure since 1990. This program must be combined with combating the ambitions and privileges of the bureaucracy, namely, the struggle for political revolution and the establishment of proletarian democracy in Cuba. A political revolution in Cuba would be only be possible if there is a revolution on the continent. Without this, any attempt at political revolution in Cuba would not survive.

FOR POLITICAL REVOLUTION AGAINST CAPITALIST RESTORATION

The struggle for political revolution on the island assumes a permanent character, fighting the measures of the Castro government that conspire against the property relations and forms created by expropriation of imperialism and the Cuban bourgeoisie. At the same time we advocate the construction of popular committees of workers, peasants and cooperative members. We must fight against the secret dialogue agreements with Democrats, Republicans or 'worms' as well as with the European imperialism and the Latin American bourgeoisie, everything must be submitted to the debate, rectification and ratification by the organized population.

No return of the property to the 'worms'. What was expropriated must remain state-owned and under the control of the democratic workers' councils, producers and consumers. The first priority of the state is to ensure health and food for the people. No privilege for bureaucracy and for tourists to the detriment to the working masses. Down with tourist separatism, for the free access of all Cubans to all hotels, beaches and spas used exclusively by tourists. Everything must be paid for in Cuban pesos. We must defeat the bureaucracy in the struggle for proletarian democracy and in the struggle for equality against the privileges.



Pope Francis and Obama – the Pope was central to the plans of US Imperialism against Cuba

It is necessary to institute a workers' court of inquiry to investigate and condemn corruption in the black market and amongst the new rich. We defend the right to strike and to organize as part of the struggle for political independence against the Castro bureaucracy, imperialism, its NGO counter revolutionaries and the Vatican. We are for proletarian control of industry and the economy as a whole as well as on trade agreements and foreign trade with Europe, with China and the entire Eurasian block and the Latin American capitalist countries. We demand accounting control by the working class delegates with executive powers to inspect the books of all enterprises. These delegates must hold mandates which are subject to recall and they must be elected in the workplace by the workforce.

Only workers must decide how much and what should be produced and distributed, as well as the wages and the pace of production. They must combat the mass layoffs, privatization of state enterprises and cuts in social services in the state. We oppose the creation of any party or organization that opposes the workers' state and the dictatorship of the proletariat and defended the creation of a revolutionary Trotskyist party in Cuba and the establishment of proletarian democracy on the island. Capitalist restoration is not a fait accompli in Cuba; only the revolutionary struggle of the Latin American masses against any internal or external restorationist religious offensive can defeat this.

Notes

1. <http://www.marxists.org/portugues/trotsky/1938/programa/cap02.htm#13>
2. <http://wp.clicrbs.com.br/olharglobal/2014/12/18/e-a-coisa-certa-a-fazer-a-integra-do-discurso-de-obama-sobre-cuba/?topo=13,1,1,,13>
3. The tendency of change of the United States against Cuba is essentially the change in the world economy after the crisis of 2007-2008, the fact that MERCOSUR, UNASUR and the CELAC stopped outside the US and Canada. These countries were left out of the Latin America and the Caribbean. CELAC has established agreements with China in meetings chaired by Cuba. (The Union of South American Nations, UNASUR; (Spanish: Unión de Naciones Suramericanas, UNASUR; Portuguese: União de Nações Sul-Americanas, UNASUL; Dutch: Unie van Zuid-Amerikaanse Naties, UZAN) is an intergovernmental union integrating two existing customs unions – Mercosur and the Andean Community of Nations (CAN) – as part of a continuing process of South American integration. Union of South American Nations, From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Union_of_South_American_Nations CELAC, The Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) is an intergovernmental mechanism for dialogue and political agreement, which includes permanently thirty-three countries in Latin America and the Caribbean for the first time. It was created with a commitment to advance the gradual process of regional integration, unity and carefully balancing political, economic, social and cultural diversity of Latin America and the Caribbean, 600 million people. http://www.celacinternational.org/?page_id=3232 http://websie.eclac.cl/anuario_estadistico/anuario_2009/pdf/Anuario_2009.pdf http://websie.eclac.cl/anuario_estadistico/anuario_2009/pdf/Anuario_2009.pdf

Socialist Fight analysis of political developments in Ukraine

Socialist Fight has reprinted the following statement by the freed Borotba activists and on the next page the interview with Victor Shapinov by Alexander Chalenk. The first piece raises many questions and in the interview Shapinov answers most of them.

It is an honest and undoubtedly truthful assessment and his conclusions mark him out as a serious Marxist intellect grappling with the political and ideological problems faced by the working class and his own group. In particular we would highlight the following passage as demonstrating that, either consciously or empirically, this comrade is approaching the essence of Lenin's *April Theses* and Trotsky's *Permanent Revolution*:

"There is a view that as soon as the state apparatus of the republics is set up, the chaos will immediately cease. This is only partly correct. First, there are serious forces that are not interested in the new state succeeding. Second, even when a state apparatus is built, there is no guarantee that the same vices will not sprout there."

During the Civil War of 1918-21, the "White" counterintelligence often arrested people and accused them of working for the Bolsheviks -- with the sole purpose of squeezing money from them. Among the "Reds" this was virtually absent, as personal enrichment was forbidden, and the state apparatus had to work for the public good. So long as the People's Republics cannot decide whether they are "White" or "Red," these two lines will continue to fight.

One line wants to replace the Ukrainian oligarchs,

corrupt officials and bureaucrats with their own, "Novorossiyan," oligarchs, corrupt officials and bureaucrats. The second line really wants to get rid of oligarchic capitalism and all its charms." If the first line wins, then the "spin" will not be stopped by the construction of the state apparatus, it will just become public in scale. The only way out is to make the People's Republics really popular. But, unfortunately, not all forces want this."

The question the initial statement raised were:

If the Vostok Brigade are solely responsible for the kidnapping why did it take so long for the government of the Peoples Republic to free them? Under whose authority does Alexander Khodakovsky operate? Shapinov tells us: "Real power rests with the militias. They themselves function as police, prosecutors and intelligence agencies, courts and prisons."

What gives him the authority to deport Borotba activists (all Borotba members?) from the 'territory of the DNR and the Lugansk People's Republic' as they tell us in their statement? Surely if Khodakovsky was acting outside the authority of the governments at the very least they would be free to operate in those parts of the Donbass NOT controlled by him? Answer as above with the rider that the Vostok Brigade must be able to dictate to all the other militias in the region.

It has long been speculated that Khodakovsky is simply an agent of Putin and it is he that calls the shots in the Donbass. Did Putin ok the kidnapping and detentions? Shapinov does speculate

on the political motivation behind their own detention and points out:

"People who have always been unequivocal opponents of the Kiev nationalist regime came. They are captured by their own allies. They are held, despite the fact that top officials -- ministers and deputies -- declared them "fit." Then they are deported to Russia for obscure reasons."

This is a clear class analysis as is this piece in the statement:

"Apparently, there is a view that as representatives of the communist movement, we could start an opposition to the activities of the DNR leadership."

They carry a picture of Trotsky on their banner, they are in the main young and uncorrupted militants (although some corrupt Stalinist elements may still persist) of and clearly some have reached the conclusion that some of the bourgeois nationalist forces leading the 'Peoples Republics' must be defeated because they are "Novorossiyan," oligarchs, corrupt officials and bureaucrats". Only a revolutionary mobilisation can inspire the masses in the East, win the workers in the West and in Russia to the side of revolutionary socialism.

That is only the organised working class has this political interest in expropriating the capitalists and running industries under workers' control and spreading the revolution region wide and worldwide. But that's Trotskyism, that's Permanent Revolution, that's modern day revolutionary Marxism itself. Clearly that movement has begun on the ground, it needs political leadership now.

Borotba 4: Statement on our detention in Donetsk

We — Borotba activists Muratova, Albu, Firsov and Shapinov — arrived in Donetsk on December 18 to establish contacts with representatives of the Donetsk People's Republic (DNR) and provide all possible assistance in the anti-fascist struggle of the people of Donbass. We also had information that at the end of December a prisoner exchange would take place, which would include our comrades trapped in the dungeons of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) on charges of "creating a terrorist organization" — Vlad Wojciechowski and Nikolai Popov. We held a series of meetings with DNR activists, in particular with the Communists Alexander Smekalinym and Andriy Yakovenko. We were also scheduled to meet with DNR Foreign Minister Alexander Kofman, head of the Communist Party of Donbass Boris Litvinov and deputy chairman of the People's Soviet of the DNR Denis Pushilin.

On Sunday, December 21, three of us — Muratova, Firsov and Shapinov — set off to see areas of Donetsk that suffered from the shelling of the Ukrainian army. In the district of Marshal Zhukov Boulevard, we were stopped by a car carrying soldiers of the "Essence of Time" division of the Vostok Brigade. Having checked our documents, they demanded we get into their car. Complying, we were taken to the headquarters of the Vostok Brigade in the vicinity of the Donetsk airport. There we were handed over to the commandant,

who took us to the Special Division of the Vostok Brigade (4th base of Vostok in the area of St. Elevatornaya). The staff of the Special Division confiscated our mobile phones and personal belongings, and said that after checking we would be released.

In the Special Department we were not allowed to contact friends or relatives to inform them about where we were, and the staff also refused to inform them. As it turned out, the staff of the Special Division did not admit our detention even in response to direct requests from DNR officials. After a few days of detention, we managed to secretly inform our comrades of our whereabouts.

Learning about our arrest, Alexei Albu wrote to the Deputy Speaker of Parliament Denis Pushilin and head of the parliamentary committee Boris Litvinov. Albu went to the Special Division with a letter written by Boris Litvinov to release the Borotba activists, but instead of releasing the detainees, Albu was arrested.

Requests to the Vostok Brigade leadership for the release of the Borotba activists came from DNR officials (Denis Pushilin, Boris Litvinov, "Gloomy"), well-known anti-junta public figures (Boris Rozhin (Colonel Cassad), Oleg Tsarev, Konstantin Dolgov, Igor Dimitrov, Alexander Vasilyev, Vladimir Rogov, Daria Mitin, Anatoly Baranov, Boris Kagarlitskiy, Victor Tyulkin and others), Russian left-wing politicians and social



activists (Yulia Polukhina, members of the Communist Party Valery Rashkin, Kazbek Taisaev, etc.). But their testimony that we are activists in the resistance to the Kiev regime made no impression on the staff of the Special Division.

Throughout our detention, we were not shown any charges. The staff were limited to the bizarre claim that "we need to check."

After two weeks of detention in the Special Division, members of the Ministry of State Security of the DNR came. They told us that we would be immediately taken to the Russian border and deported from the DNR. They also reported that we are forbidden to enter the territory of the DNR and the Lugansk People's Republic (LC). In response to a question about the motives of deportation, Ministry officers said that "now you are with us for one thing, and then we do not know what you want to

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Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!

Victor Shapinov Interview: As I was sitting 'in the basement' in the DNR

Interview with Victor Shapinov, a leader of Union Borotba (Struggle), who travelled to the Donetsk People's Republic (DNR was detained and spent almost two weeks "in the basement" [in detention]. The interview has been slightly shortened for space.

AC: How did you get "in the basement" of the Vostok Battalion? What charges were brought against you?

VS: We should never have been "in the basement" of the Special Division of the Vostok Battalion. "The basement" is for those who have committed some offense, and we were held there for all 13 days of our detention. In fact, we had come to Donetsk virtually on an official visit. We had set up meetings with ministers and leaders of the DNR People's Soviet, including Foreign Minister Alexander Kofman, Deputy Speaker of Parliament Denis Pushilin, and Chair of the Committee on Economy and Finance Boris Litvinov.

On the day when we were detained [Dec. 21 – ed.], we did not have any scheduled meetings, and we just walked around the city, inspecting the damage inflicted by shelling. We were stopped by a patrol. The soldiers checked our documents and asked us to go with them. Contrary to various reports, we were not near the airport or military installations, but in the city, where we walked among civilians. The patrol delivered us to a base, we drove a few kilometers. From there we were transferred to the commandant's office, guarded by the Special Division of the Vostok Battalion. There we sat for all 13 days, not in an actual basement, but on the third floor at the former base of the Interior Troops, where the division is located.

During all this time, we were not charged and were not shown any charges. We were interrogated several times, mostly questioned about our participation in the AntiMaidan movement and our political activities. I got the impression that the investigators of the Special Division themselves did not understand why we were detained, and all this time were trying to come up with some "sin" that could be used to hold us. When it became clear that there was nothing, they had to return us to Russia...

AC: What do you think about all these basements [detentions]? When will it all stop?

VS: "The basement" is a direct consequence of the fact that the new state is not built or is being built very slowly. The Ukrainian state in the Donbass region collapsed in the spring and summer. Real power rests with the militias. They themselves function as police, prosecutors and intelligence agencies, courts and prisons. Naturally, the militia units are different -- some tried to establish a new, just order, and some used this situation to enrich themselves. There are more of the first, of course, but there are also, without doubt, the second.

There is a view that as soon as the state apparatus of the republics is set up, the chaos will immediately cease. This is only partly correct. First, there are serious forces that are not interested in the new state succeeding. Second, even when a state apparatus is built, there is no guarantee that the same vices will not sprout there.

During the Civil War of 1918-21, the "White" counterintelligence often arrested people and accused them of working for the Bolsheviks -- with the sole purpose of squeezing money from them. Among the "Reds" this was virtually absent, as personal enrichment was forbidden, and the state apparatus had to work for the public good. So long as the People's Republics cannot decide whether they are "White" or "Red," these two lines will continue to fight.

One line wants to replace the Ukrainian oligarchs, corrupt officials and bureaucrats with their own, "Novorossiyan," oligarchs, corrupt officials and bureaucrats. The second line really wants to get rid of oligarchic capitalism and all its charms." If the first line wins, then the "spin" will not be stopped by the construction of the state apparatus, it will just become public in scale. The only way out is to make the People's Republics really popular. But, unfortunately, not all forces want this.

AC: Do you realize that if you were detained "in the basement" of Batman [Alexander Bednov, a militia commander killed in Lugansk on Jan. 1] – whose director has the call sign "Maniac" – that you would not have left?

VS: I, honestly, still do not understand what the story is with Batman – whether his death was

really about combating lawlessness, or disposing of commanders with opposing views. Therefore, I would not want my words to be used in some way in this story.

I do not rule out the possibility of some dirty game to discredit the militias and People's Republics. Moreover, it is possible that in this game the militias themselves are being used blindly. For example, the strange story of our detention.

People who have always been unequivocal opponents of the Kiev nationalist regime came. They are captured by their own allies. They are held, despite the fact that top officials – ministers and deputies -- declared them "fit." Then they are deported to Russia for obscure reasons. I would like to ask: Has this strengthened the reputation of the DNR or hurt it? In my opinion, it clearly hurt. Maybe it's just stupidity, maybe deliberate defamation, an attempt to discredit the DNR as "irresponsible," because it grabs and detains its own friends.

The same is true with Batman. If what the LC prosecutor's office says is true, then he and his entourage deserved severe punishment. But shooting him in a 90s-style ambush is not a victory for the rule of law.

In general, the solution must be political, not military. Mao Zedong, when he led a guerrilla war against the pro-American Kuomintang, said that "the gun should not control the party; the party should control the gun." So far in the People's Republic the gun controls everything. And there is no "party" -- in the sense of a clear ideology or understanding of what we are building. This situation contributes to the degeneration of the militia. If, in this sense, everything is left just as it is and centralized controls are created, then such a state will not have the support of the population.

The People's Republics are the dream of people who want to build "another Ukraine" without Nazism, oligarchs, or corruption. If the leaders of the republics -- both military and civilian -- exchange this dream for fancy cars and houses, for coal trade with Ukraine, the people will not forgive them.

Interviewed by Alexander Chalenko

Translation by Greg Butterfield

Continued from page 27

do." Apparently, there is a view that as representatives of the communist movement, we could start an opposition to the activities of the DNR leadership.

At the moment we do not have enough information to make an unambiguous conclusion about what is behind our arrest and expulsion from the DNR — banal excessive vigilance of intelligence agencies of the Republic, political denunciation or some kind of political order. In any case, such actions with respect to sincere friends of the Donbass rebellion only harm the reputation of the People's Republics.

Despite this unfortunate incident in which we were unwitting participants, we have not changed

our attitude to the People's Republics and the anti-fascist uprising in the Donbass. We remain bitter enemies of the Kiev regime of oligarchs and Nazis, and friends of all who oppose fascism. However, some recent developments, including our arrest and deportation, give rise to legitimate concerns — whether the original spirit of the anti-fascist and anti-oligarchic revolt will continue, or will it be buried in favour of commercial and political interests of various groups operating in the republics?

During the time of our arrest, members of the Special Division and militia showed us the best attitude. We did not witness any ill-treatment or force used against prisoners, including soldiers of the Ukrainian Armed Forces (APU) and punitive

"territorial" battalions. We were fed three times a day, the same as the militias. We had the opportunity to bathe and wash our clothes. APU prisoners and militias who have committed offenses are held in the same conditions, and the prisoners are allowed to visit relatives. We saw them trying to educate APU soldiers about the aggressive nature of the war in Donbass and the regime in Kiev.

We are going to fight to lift the ban on entry of Borotba activists to the territory of People's Republics.

We thank all the friends and comrades who sought our liberation.

Maria Muratova, Alexei Albu, Maxim Firsov, Victor Shapinov

Brokering a sell out to Kiev: ¿Dónde está Borotba? Release the Borotba Four!

Statement by: *Socialist Fight – Britain; Coletivo Lenin – Brasil; Resistência Popular Revolucionária – Brasil; Liga Comunista – Brasil; Tendência Militante Bolchevique – Argentina.* 28-12-2014

We demands the immediate release of the four Borotba activists Maxim Firsov, Victor Shapinov and Maria Muratova, kidnapped on 21 December and of Odessa city council deputy and May 2nd massacre survivor Alexey Albu who was taken hostage while demanding his comrades' release on 27 December. Alexey Albu spoke very powerfully via Skype to the meeting of the Solidarity with Antifascist Resistance in Ukraine on 11 November at the Marx Memorial Library in Clerkenwell, London

The In Defence of Marxism site reported on 18 November on his account of his escape from the fascist attack on Odessa on 2 May last:

"When the fire started himself and other comrades jumped from the windows only to be met by fascists thugs who beat them up. He then had to lie still, seriously injured across a pile of bodies, where the slightest movement indicating life would have resulted in his certain death. Alexey's contribution to the meeting was rightly met with a standing ovation. Despite being a victim of these disgraceful attacks, Alexey has been forced into exile in Crimea as remaining in Odessa would have resulted in his arrest." [1]

A letter appealing to top government officials of the Donetsk Peoples' Republic and the Novorossiyan Armed Forces from Greg Butterfield, coordinator, Solidarity with Ukraine Antifascists Committee International Action Center, New York, NY, USA contained the following:

"Victor Shapinov, Maxim Firsov and Maria Muratova are members of the Ukrainian antifascist organization Union Borotba. During a solidarity visit to Donetsk on Dec. 21, these three comrades were taken prisoner by Vostok Battalion soldiers. They were mistaken for a Ukrainian reconnaissance and sabotage team."

And later:

"Yesterday, Dec. 27, Odessa Regional Council Deputy and survivor of the May 2 massacre Alexei Albu went to the Vostok Battalion headquarters to appeal for their release. He has not been heard from since."

We think it is obvious that no "mistake" has been made here. The Vostok Battalion is commanded by the controversial Alexander Sergeyevich Khodakovsky, an ally of Denis Pushilin who is, according to Wikipedia:

"a politician who was the self-declared Chairman of the Supreme Soviet (Speaker of parliament) of the Donetsk People's Republic, and therefore, under the draft Constitution adopted on May 15, the self-declared republic's head of state. Prior to his political activism, Pushilin worked for a recent successor of the 1990s Russian Ponzi scheme company MMM, which cost its customers millions of dollars before it was disbanded in 1994 Pushilin never denied involvement in such schemes and affirmed that "pyramid schemes were legal in Russia at the time". [2]

Denis Pushilin reactionary bourgeois politician

Denis Pushilin is the most obvious reactionary politician in the Donbass and he is allied to a crucial leader of a part of the NovoRúsian armed forces. Whilst we may harbour severe doubts that the arrest of the first three Borotba activists was a mistake the arrest of such a high profile figure as Alexei Albu cannot be an error. The declared intention is to hand them over to Kiev because they are "Kiev government spies" which would inevitably lead to their murders. Dmytriy Kovalevich reported the following on Facebook:

"The situation is as follows: battalion that captures them (Vostok) suspects the comrades as 'Kiev government spies' and want to hand them to Kiev authorities. The battalion is believed to have connections with richest oligarch Akhmetov and there are tensions between it and authorities of DPR. DPR authorities think that the battalion works for Kiev itself. Yesterday another comrade came to the battalion for detained comrades but disappeared too (no connections with him). But from the other hand, yesterday the arrested Vlad Wojciechovsky from Odessa was released by Kiev authorities and exchanged for Kiev POWs. The situation is rather complex since the rebels have never been a unanimous force."

The charge of being "Kiev government spies" and the reports here by Dmytriy Kovalevich makes it clear the advance of the counter-revolution. There are strong similarities to the attack on the Telefonica in Barcelona led by the Stalinists on the 3 May 1937 led by the Asultos controlled by the Stalinists and the whole of the organised working of Barcelona, anarchists and POUMists members in the great majority arose in outrage at this act of class treachery and a great class battle emerged, the most heroic uprising since the Russian Revolution. Like the POUM Borotba are not a Trotskyist party. But the Stalinists had a different story when the workers' justified outrage had been betrayed by the leadership of the anarchists and the POUM. This is how Revolutionary History exposes the Popular Front outlook and recounts the aftermath of the great heroic Dias de Mayo in Barcelona:

"But was there not, so it seems, a 'Trotskyist' party in Spain, the POUM? According to the lies of the Stalinists, a Trotskyist party would only have worked with the Gestapo. Are not all those who denounce the crimes of the Stalinists



Trotsky on Andreas Nin: "But in joining the Popular Front, participating in the Popular Front government of Catalonia and refusing to call for the workers to take power in Catalonia in May 1937, Nin had committed a betrayal that proved fatal not only to himself but to the Spanish revolution."

and do not blindly carry out the orders of the degenerate Muscovite bureaucracy, agents of the Gestapo? It was the POUM, Trotskyist and therefore an agent of the Gestapo, that carried out the putsch of May 1937, but happily, thanks to the fortunate intervention of the Popular Front, and the Communist Party, the PSUC, (the United Socialist Party of Catalonia, 'Socialist' but belonging to the Third International), the Trotskyist POUMist devil was over-come!

In the months of May-June 1937 they began to breathe again: they had liquidated 'Trotskyism' in Spain, and above all in Catalonia. The government of Largo Caballero, which they had thought to be on the right road until May, but which was really soft and semi-Trotskyist, was replaced by the government of victory presided over by Doctor Negrín, a real government of the Popular Front, real because it was rid of all the Trotskyists and suspect people, real because it was wanted by all countries, and particularly France, and consequently it would be capable of fighting and defeating Fascism." [3]

This move is another attempt by Putin and his allies within the Donetsk Peoples Republic, Pushilin in the first place, to broker a deal with US and EU imperialism behind the backs of the Donetsk working class. To achieve this it is necessary to eliminate or intimidate the most militant and leftist of the opponents of both Kiev and the corrupt bourgeois nationalist government of Putin and his Donetsk allies. It is no accident that at the 11 November meeting at which Alexei Albu spoke so movingly that he got a standing ovation the spokesman for the Stalinist Ukraine Communist Party made an appalling capitulationist contribution, as reported in that same In Defense of Marxism website:

"Mention has to be made of the second intervention by the representative of the Ukraine Communist Party Anatolii Sokoliuk, where he seemed to be downplaying the reactionary meaning of the black and red flag of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (which collaborated with the Nazis during World War 2 and carried out atrocities against the Jewish and Polish population) and even said that the symbol of

¿Dónde está Borotba?

the Azov Battalion, the wolfsangel rune of the SS, was not “evil”. We have to disagree here, as the fact that such symbols are now widespread and commonly used in Ukraine, even condoned by the state, is actually very dangerous, as the persecution of the Communist Party of Ukraine itself shows.” [4]

These kidnappings must be seen in light of the current ‘peace negotiations’ which have led to the exchange of a big number of prisoners of war but must also be seen as the preparations of Imperialism for the next round of attacks on NovoRússia and on Russia itself. A number of Socialist Fight members attended that meeting and can testify that the contribution was truly appalling and, as the official spokesman for the Ukraine Communist party, Sokoliuk’s speech testifies to the preparation of the leadership to openly betray the struggle in the Donetsk. Their former allegiance to the corrupt oligarch Yanukovich testifies to the political orientation of the UCP and its preparation to betray its own rank and file members as well as the working class of the Donetsk. And Imperialism is taking advantage of the weakness and treachery. On 22.12.14 we learned that:

“The President of Kazakhstan arrived with the official visit today, and we have the President of Belarus and President of Kazakhstan coordinating their actions with Ukraine before the trip to Moscow,” Poroshenko said. [5]

The elections in Moldavia showed us a similar political collapse of the Communist party there:

The elections were a victory for the pro-European integration bloc. The elections represented a significant loss for the Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova (PCRM) as they were reduced from 38 to 21 seats, while a previously small rival Russophile party, the Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova (PSRM), won the most seats.

The Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova (PCRM) was the big loser, as it supported European integration and its left wing and pro-Russian rival the Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova (PSRM) was the big winner because of its opposition to western imperialism.

Terrible danger

The organised working class of the Donetsk is now in terrible danger of suffering a major defeat at the hands of cynical bourgeois politicians who had the bad fortune to be caught behind the lines when the civil war started and were determined that the “Antifascist” struggle would not be allowed to morph into a socialist revolution or that a revolutionary socialist leadership of the Bolshevik type would not emerge there from within Borotba or anywhere else.

The domination of ideas from WWII like the Great Patriotic War, where Stalin allied with Churchill and Roosevelt against both

Hitler and revolution must be explicitly rejected. An alliance under the political domination of the bourgeois forces that now dominate the Donbass can only lead to the defeats that this policy led to in France in 1934 and Spain in 1939. Only a revolutionary socialist perspective can avoid the fatal perspective of compromise with imperialism we see from the UCP and the Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova, to mention but a few. Borotba is groping its way towards revolutionary socialism, it has the best, most courageous and most leftist fighters and for that reason they are now the target not only of the Kiev regime’s fascist thugs of the Azov brigade but of the counter-revolutionaries of the Vostok Battalion within the Donetsk Peoples Republic itself, principally Pushilin and his allies

Only establishing the class independence of the working class under a perspective of Permanent Revolution, i.e. only the working class has a true interest in leading the anti fascist and anti imperialist struggle, only an anti imperialist united front can win the best elements within the Donetsk to overthrow the internal counter revolution and face Kiev’s fascists with the revolutionary enthusiasm and perspective to win over workers in western Ukraine. That’s the perspective that will defeat Kiev’s fascists, the counter-revolution now emerging in Russia and will begin a revolutionary process in Europe and globally.

We must learn the lesson of the Spanish Revolution on 1934-39. Only when the working class is in the saddle can fascism and imperialism be truly defeated. That is the task is now revolutionary and to achieve that we must now defeat the counter-revolution within Donetsk and Luhansk.

Now our immediate task on that road is to demand the release of the four Borotba activists and the defeat of the conspiracy that put them in jail. In Spain when Andas Nin, the leader of the POUM was kidnapped the demand was raised ¿Dónde está Andreu Nin? But he was kidnapped, tortured and murdered by the Stalinist so Stalin could sign his pact with Hitler in August 1939

This is how the WSWs website reports the aftermath of the ceasefire in Barcelona in May 1937:

“Nin himself was separated from the others and taken to Alcalá de Henares, where he was interrogated for three days. When he refused to confess to being a fascist agent, he was tortured to death. His body was buried on the outskirts of the town. The GPU then ordered German International Brigade volunteers to storm the prison where Nin had been held. To give the impression that the Gestapo had come to release him, they left Nationalist bank notes,



The famous graffiti in 1937 in Barcelona. POUMists demand the whereabouts of Andreas Nin, their leader. The Stalinists answer – “In Salamanca or Berlin” – i.e. with the fascists. In fact they had kidnapped him and tortured him to death.

Falangist badges and false documents behind them.”

After Nin’s death, Trotsky described him as “an old and incorruptible revolutionary.” The members of the POUM, Trotsky said, “fought heroically on all fronts against the Fascists in Spain.” But in joining the Popular Front, participating in the Popular Front government of Catalonia and refusing to call for the workers to take power in Catalonia in May 1937, Nin had committed a betrayal that proved fatal not only to himself but to the Spanish revolution.” [6]

Today we raise the demand, ¿Dónde está lost militants Borotba? to make the comparison and warn the class conscious vanguard of the working class of the dangers ahead and the tasks posed

- Down with Denis Pushilin and the Vostok Battalion!
- Build Workers Defence Guards and Workers Councils to defend the organised working class and its vanguard!
- No to class collaboration, yes to the Anti Imperialist United Front!
- Build a truly International Solidarity Campaign to defend the Donetsk and Luhansk Peoples Republics and the whole Donbass region!

Notes

[1] *In Defence of Marxism* London meeting hears eyewitness account of the Odessa massacre + VIDEO <http://www.marxist.com/london-meeting-hears-eyewitness-account-of-the-odessa-massacre-video.htm>

[2] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Denis_Pushilin

[3] 17. The Workers Party of Marxist Unification (POUM) <http://www.revolutionary-history.co.uk/spain/articles/articles-of-rh0412/17-the-workers-party-of-marxist-unification-poum.htm>

[4] *In Defence of Marxism* London meeting hears eyewitness account of the Odessa massacre

[5] Source: <http://en.censor.net.ua/n317454>

[6] Ann Talbot, *The Spanish Civil War and the Popular Front*, Part two, 27 January 2009, WSWs, <http://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2009/01/spa2-j27.html>

[7] http://borotba.su/v_donecke_propali_borotbisty_maksim_firso...

For a United Front - statement by the Joint Committee

Statements of the fight against pro-imperialist coup in Brazil and Argentina; for a United Front to defeat the offensive of the employer, the government and the right! Volkswagen metallurgical point the way for the fight! 22 Jan 2015

The Joint Committee was formed by the Communist League, the Lenin Collective, and the Popular Revolutionary Resistance (Brazil) calling for an anti-imperialist united front (AIUF) against the threat of a right-wing coup in Brazil.

Declaration of the Joint Committee

2015 began with the working class coming under intense attacks from the government and employers, with threats of massive layoffs of in VW, Ford, Mercedes, with threat to unemployment insurance, sick pay, pensions, wage allowances, etc.; We also say outsourcing of medical skills, higher taxes, lack of mains waters and curbs electricity supply in the working class neighbourhoods.

In its fight against the employer offensive, which aimed to dismiss 800 workers, Metallurgical VW bypassed the trade union bureaucracy policy and put thousands of protesters to halt the Anchieta Plant [1], along with the workers of Ford and Mercedes. The example of this historic and symbolic victory of a major portion of the Brazilian working class shows that the left must resume more effective fighting methods and adopt combative attitude towards Rousseff's austerity policies. Although, conducted by the trade union bureaucracy, the victory won in this battle has only been partial because it accepted the imposition of the PDVs (voluntary resignations plan) and the resignation of subcontracted workers.

The right was strengthened in 2014, a year marked by attempts of coups and electoral mobilization of the most reactionary sections of the middle class who are xenophobic, racist, anti-popular and angry in a way not seen since the Family March in 1964. [2]

Rousseff and the PT won supported by a popular base very afraid to see their rights suspended for a possible election victory of the traditional right.

Dilma's capitulation to right pressures only paves the way for the right

But under pressure from the right Dilma adopts the program defeated at the polls and believes that by giving in to the demands of finance capital and the bourgeoisie she will disarm the forces that threaten a coup.

The tactic is to attack the rights won by working class and govern for four more years without a legal parliamentary coup armed by the private banks with the support of the mainstream media.

The right exploits the fragility of the new PT government, and has been exposing the myth of capitalist government without corruption and the farce that the economic crisis would only be

a "small wave". While Rousseff has exhausted her own political capital, the right seeks to acquire popular support away from openly coupists groups because their tactic is via impeachment legitimized by street demonstrations amplified by the mainstream media, as recently occurred in Paraguay and Ukraine.

Even opponents of the PT policies, several leftist organizations mistakenly believe that Dilma's capitulation will dissipate the risks of an attack and that, therefore, it is not necessary to fight the right with a strong united anti-coup front. This mistake can be very costly to the left in general.

The coup and the new cold war

The tactic of the internalisation of the policy of the right only serves to pave the way for reaction and has no effect against the coup. How

pete with the right wing on the streets and to shield Dilma a little and prepare his own candidacy for 2018.

The PT must co-opt the social movements to:

- 1) Control the impact of the street strikes and bring the movements under the influence of the government;

- 2) demonstrate to the big banks and private corporations they still need the PT to govern without a social crisis.

We, the Joint Committee call on the workers organized in the social movements, groups, collectives and parties of left in this meeting to go out from here with united front against anti-proletarian policy and Dilma in combat right and extreme right organizations.

United Front yes! Popular Front no!

We have no illusion in the new Popular Front which demobilises the social movements to ensure the effectively management of capitalism.

We believe that this united front must embark on a unified national programme of strikes and unrest in the streets, playing them inch by inch against the right-wing and the bosses. The united front against the right must coordinate the struggles against mass layoffs in the industry categories and other sectors of essential services (rail, subway, bus), with popular movements struggling for housing (FIST, MTST, MNLN).

At the same time, the United Front itself will be able to give a qualitative jump in the organisation of the popular movements by coordinating events, and thus it will be able to repel any attempt to influence or hijacking the agenda of workers' aims by the onslaught of right-wing media. They use their ideological instruments known encourage the conservative middle class and by infiltrating right-wing elements into the left demonstrations.

Notes

[1] The Anchieta plant in São Bernardo do Campo is less than 30 km from São Paulo. It is the main plant outside Germany and it is also the seat of the headquarters and the Development department of Volkswagen of Brasil.

[2] Refers to the coup on 1964, "in the year before the coup, left-wing President João "Jango" Goulart embarked on a program of social reform. A speech he gave in Rio on March 13, 1964, promising dramatic changes sparked fears of a communist takeover. On March 19, hundreds of thousands in Sao Paulo joined the anti-reform *Family March With God for Liberty*, which led right-wing military elements to believe they could depose Goulart without sparking a civil war. They were proved right." (Washington Post, 31 March 2014)



Under pressure from the right Dilma adopts the program defeated at the polls and believes that by giving in to the demands of finance capital and the bourgeoisie she will disarm the forces that threaten a coup.

come? Because even the most neoliberal economic policy to be applied by Dilma not solve the current problem in the US, located by the new cold war world, where imperialism tries to contain the growing economic influence of the political and military bloc of countries led by Russia and China.

The threatening coup in Brazil is mainly a product of this new international situation arising from the need of the US to regain its Latin American backyard. This they seek to do by deposing the PT government (because they are collaborators with their international BRICS partners who advocate of de-dollarization of commercial transactions) and replacing it by a typical right-wing pro-imperialist government.

No politics cooption! For a united front against the right and Dilma's austerity tax

Knowing the right-wing dynamic in both the streets and in the highest authorities of the state (Congress, Supreme Court, federal police and prosecutors), Lula agitates the MTST (the homeless workers' movement) to convene a kind of "popular front of masses" to try to com-

Global inter-capitalist struggle; the United States against the Eurasia nations in the Argentinean Nisman case

Irespective of whether it was murder, suicide or assisted suicide and who it was that killed or drove Nisman to suicide the pro-imperialist opposition and the left pseudo Trotskyist are seeking to use the Nisman case to destabilize the 'crisinismo' (supporters of President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner), today the government of South America most linked to Russia and China. [1]

We must now examine the context in which the Nisman case occurs.

The crisinismo need to ensure the political and economic conditions in their last year of Government that will promote the candidacy of a reliable successor. For that is the key to ensure that they deepen the trends linking Argentina with the Russian-Chinese Centre. In this context it is central to the crisinismo to put limits to the SIDE, [2] the current Secretary of Intelligence which operates a real 'parallel government' linked to the CIA and the Mossad, and therefore has strong ties to the United States and Israel. It was suggested that they have targeted even a member of military intelligence, Milani, as head of the army, even paying the political cost of accusing Milani of involvement with the crimes of the dictatorship. [3]

It must be clarified that the expectation of the crisinismo in Milani as someone more interested in links with Russia and China in practice has not yet passed any litmus test. In this manoeuvre, the crisinismo hopes to set limits on those sectors of the repressive apparatus most linked to imperialism, like SIDE, that certainly could be and is an instrument of imperialism itself against Argentinean links with the Russian-Chinese Centre. It should be noted that for the crisinismo this manoeuvre is limited because it comes into conflict with the coexistence pact which the kichnerismo (including her husband, former President Néstor Kirchner) had for a decade with the SIDE, having participated in the manoeuvres of imperialist intelligence on behalf of kichnerismo which they made before 2011 involving Iran and the AMIA even before the United Nations case. [4]

In this context of the crisinismo wanting to put limits to the parallel Government of the SIDE, changing its headquarters, moving heads in the shadow but mostly relying on the intelligence military. It is under these conditions that are registered to the current "appliances war" of which it forms part to the death of Attorney Nisman, a man linked

to the US State Department. Therefore, the death of Attorney Nisman, as part of a confrontation of the bourgeois pro-imperialist State intelligence, is not a death of our class; we neither cry for nor claim it.

The manoeuvre of the bourgeois opposition has all the features of Islamophobia driven by imperialism against the oppressed peoples, who are after the greatest wealth of energy on the planet, as they are in

Iran and the Hezbollah attacks through the media. What is to see which is an attempt to move to Argentina of the Russian-Chinese Centre. Workers should reject imperialism campaign mounted by the opposition bourgeois and followed by the left pseudo Trotskyists such as PO (Workers' Party (Partido Obrero, leader, Jorge Altamira), IS (International Socialists), CS (Socialist Convergence, Convergencia Socialista), PSTU (Unified Socialist Workers' Party (Partido Socialista dos Trabalhadores Unificado).

The crisinismo in still bourgeois party who is not able to give a real battle against imperialism because it fears to mobilize the proletariat. Is therefore unable to disrupt the opposition sepoys. [5] Workers must get rid of the influence of Peronism and of all bourgeois tendencies. They should primarily rely on their own independent class methods to fight the battle against imperialism, his national actors and also against the Government of Cristina, thus establishing a government of the working class and all who toil.

- For the dismantling of the repressive apparatus!
- Defeat the opposition pro-imperialist sepoys!
- No confidence in the Government of Cristina!

Notes

[1] Argentina Prosecutor Alberto Nisman, 51, was found slumped in the bathroom of his apartment on Sunday night (18-1-15) with a bullet wound in his head and a .22 calibre handgun beside his body. Four days before, he had given a judge a 289-page report alleging President Cristina Fernandez had secretly reached a deal to prevent prosecution of former Iranian officials accused of involvement in the 1994 car bombing of the country's largest Jewish centre... Nisman



Pro-US demonstrates against President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner after the death of Nisman.

had spent 10 years investigating the 1994 bombing of a Jewish community centre in Buenos Aires that killed 85 people, the worst terror attack in Argentine history. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/01/21/argentina-prosecutor-albe_n_6519600.html

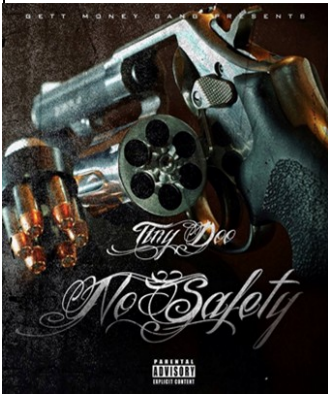
[2] Wiki: Secretaría de Inteligencia (Secretariat of Intelligence, S.I.) is the premier intelligence agency of the Argentine Republic and head of its National Intelligence System. Even though the official acronym was renamed to S.I. as the new intelligence system became active, during most of its history it was called Secretaría de Inteligencia de Estado (Secretariat of State Intelligence, SIDE) and it still is referred to as SIDE by the public, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secretar%C3%ADa_de_Inteligencia

[3] Iconic member of *Mothers of Plaza de Mayo* *Founding Line* Nora Cortiñas yesterday (26-12-14) renewed her criticism against controversial Army Chief César Milani, who was charged on Tuesday (23-12-14) with crimes against humanity committed during the last military dictatorship. Cortiñas insisted that Milani had to be dismissed from his position and the human rights leader said she wanted him to be questioned for the forced disappearance of her son Gustavo Cortiñas, which took place in 1977. <http://buenosairesherald.com/article/178133/iconic-mother-calls-for-milani%E2%80%99s-dismissal>

[4] The foreign ministers of Iran and Argentina met on the sidelines of the summit meeting of the African leaders in the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa on January 27, 2013. During the meeting, the governments of Argentina and the Islamic Republic of Iran signed a memorandum of understanding on the terrorist bomb attack against AMIA (Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina) building in Buenos Aires on July 18, 1994. <http://www.iranreview.org/content/Documents/Iran-Argentina-Agreement-on-AMIA.htm>

[5] Sepoy, an indigenous soldier serving in the army of a foreign conqueror, especially an Indian soldier serving under British command in India, hence a politician in the service of foreign imperialist powers.

Islamophobia is the racism de jour



Brandon Duncan: The state of California wants to affirm in law that freedom of speech is a privilege, not a right. If we are to compare the case of Brandon Duncan and Charlie Hebdo 'gross hypocrisy' is the only phrase that springs to mind.

Continued from p. 36 Apparently, prosecutors believe that writing lyrics about crime is a crime itself – and one punishable by a life sentence in prison. If we are to compare the case of Brandon Duncan and Charlie Hebdo 'gross hypocrisy' is the only phrase that springs to mind.

Of course the 'free speech' of Charlie Hebdo attacks the ruling class Christians, Jews etc but that is not used to justify the mass murder of hundreds of thousands. So you could defend the racism against Irish people because it was only a little fun and not understand how it justified the British army murders in Ireland? And those 1920s and 1930s anti-Semitic cartoons; just a little fun and not ideological preparation for the Holocaust?

Freedom of Expression and Racism

Charlie Hebdo is a right-wing libertarian magazine which promotes racism, Islamophobia, sexism and homophobia. Whatever the origins of these journalists in the leftism 1968 and after since the 2001 9/11 attack they have become ever more the mouthpiece of French imperialism.

At the height of war in Ireland anti Irish jokes and racist cartoons were everywhere. The *Evening Standard* published one called, 'The Irish', by JAK, on 29 October 1982 and Ken Livingstone withdrew all GLC advertising from them.

The poster was featured with grotesque figures wielding a variety of gruesome weapons and was part of a wider series of images and writings that have appeared in the UK for over 100 years that have portrayed the Irish as apelike, stupid, violent etc.

The cartoon led to protests by the British Irish community and resulted in the GLC led by Ken Livingstone banning advertising (worth some £100,000 per year) in the *Standard*.

Ken Livingstone stated:

"The clear message of the cartoon is that the Irish, as a race and as a community, are murderous, mindless thugs . . . I do not believe in free speech for racists . . . We will not put another penny into the *Standard* while they continue to vilify the Irish."

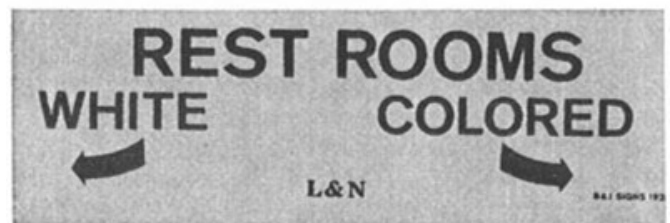
The purpose of the attacks was to portray the Irish as sub human savages and so make the British army killing of them acceptable. It is truly pathetic that those leftists who supported the stance taken by Livingstone then cannot do so over Charlie Hebdo today.

In 1930s America when white people were burning black peo-

ple on trees, whites could equally have used the argument that they, like Charlie Hebdo, attack all religions equally. After all, there were cartoons even about the American president! However, making insulting cartoons about white people who controlled the power structures was not the same as demonizing black people - a powerless underclass.

Imagery of black people being dumb, violent, lazy thieves who looked like monkeys - upheld a political reality, the very imagery re-enforced the prejudices of those in power and subjugated blacks. Until the 1950s, signs like no dogs, no Negroes, no Mexicans were common markers of legally enforced laws of racial segregation in America. The Franck law against Muslim women wearing the veil/hijab is along those same lines.

The same with Jews in Nazi Germany—Imagine today's spurious and conceited argument being used by the Nazi's—could a German newspaper hide behind the claim it also made fun of white Germans? How unjustified that only the Jews complained so! After all, Germans didn't complain when they were made fun of—those backward Jews and their greedy religion didn't understand free speech!



These notices were common in the 'Deep South' of the US; Jim Crow still ruled until the 1950s.

This is the memory of a Jewish person of what it was like in

"My earliest personal encounter with anti-Semitism were the horrible cartoons of Jews in the official Nazi propaganda papers, "Das Schwarze Korps", an SS paper, and "Der Völkische Beobachter", displayed behind glass in showcases fixed at eye level to walls at street corners. They showed the most ugly Jews with the most enormous noses clad in either Russian-Bolshevik uniforms or with an "Uncle Sam" Stars and Stripes top hat and called Plutocrats, both apparently dominating the world, or trying to, profiting from exploiting good-looking innocent Germans. How unlike the truth!" [4]

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!

Islamophobia is the racism de jour

The Muslims of France and other European countries are suffering that same type of attacks today. As the Muslims of the Middle East and Afghanistan have been slaughtered in their hundreds of thousands by imperialist armies in the last few decades racism against Muslims justified this mass slaughter. We identify anti Muslim racism today as gelling with the imperialist slaughter in the Middle East and only superficially like the anti Christian and anti Semitic stuff, repulsive and reactionary as this is.

The French working class must defend the oppressed Muslims

The blogger Asghar Bukhari put it this way:

“White people don’t like to admit it, but those cartoons upheld their prejudice, their racism, their political supremacy, and cut it how you will—images like that upheld a political order built on discrimination. The Muslims today are a demonized underclass in France. A people vilified and attacked by the power structures. A poor people with little or no power and these vile cartoons made their lives worse and heightened the racist prejudice against them. Even white liberals have acted in the most prejudiced way. It was as if white people had a right to offend Muslims and Muslims had no right to be offended?” [5]

But we really do need a ‘health warning’ about this approach. “White people” are not the problem but Imperialism itself whose ideology does reach deep into the French working class, it is true. In line with this non-class approach Asghar Bukhari frequently confuses ‘Zionist’ with ‘Jew’ and therefore is open to the charge of anti-Semitism. And as an educated representative of the oppressed Muslims it really is not acceptable to confuse the two. The task of Marxists is to forge a programme of action to defend the Muslims of France and of Europe against the state and the far right by forging unity with the working class.

In this we concur entirely with the RCIT statement:

“A chief task for socialists in France and Europe now is to organize self-defence units in order to defend mosques and migrant districts against chauvinist attacks. It is equally urgent to build a broad united front against the anti-Muslim chauvinism. Finally, it is urgent to build a strong anti-war movement against the spreading imperialist war drive in the Middle East and in Africa.” [6]

Equally we concur with their condemnation of the French left like the French Communist party (PCF) whose national chauvinism has led them to support ‘national unity’ in effect that is their own ruling class attacks on Muslims. The NPA and Lutte Ouvrière, whilst courageously defending the Muslims, were also wrong not to put the attack in its historical and political context:

“The RCIT severely condemns the French Communist Party (PCF) and many other so-called “leftist” groups for their support of Hollande’s pro-imperialist call for “national unity.”



Nazi anti-Semitic and racist (anti-American) cartoon to appeal to ‘ordinary’ Germans.

While the centrist forces – the NPA (whose leading forces are part of the Mandeliste “Fourth International”) and Lutte Ouvrière – in their statements of January 7 have not joined Hollande’s reactionary “national unity,” they both condemn the attack on Charlie Hebdo as an attack on “freedom of expression.” At the same time, they fail to mention even in a single word the connection between this event and France’s imperialist wars against Muslim peoples, or its oppression and super-exploitation of migrants. In their statements, both of these centrist groups refer to their close relations with the journalists of Charlie Hebdo and thereby reveal their affiliation with the bourgeois-liberal milieu.” [7]

This collaboration and silence of the left is all the more appalling considering the history of French Imperialism’s exploitation of North Africa and the massacres both Muslim North Africa and Paris itself.

We summarise and quote from the article by Mawuna Remarque Koutonin in Wiki:



The Jak anti-Irish racist cartoon in the *Evening Standard* which led Ken Livingstone to withdraw all GLC advertising from the publication

Still to this day fourteen African countries are forced to pay colonial tax for the benefits of slavery and colonization. The crucial confrontations were by De Gaulle with Guinea, Togo and Senegal, the rest were forced to follow suit. In 1958 the French left Guinea and destroyed all infrastructure when they left, crushing cars and leveling buildings in an orgy of destruction. The next up was Togo, who were forced to agree to pay an annual debt to France for the so called benefits Togo got from French colonization. Senegal scared about the consequence of choosing independence from France, Leopold Sédar Senghor the first president of

Senegal declared: “The choice of the Senegalese people is independence; they want it to take place only in friendship with France, not in dispute.” From then on France accepted only an “independence on paper” for his colonies, but signed binding “Cooperation Accords”, detailing the nature of their relations with France, in particular ties to France colonial currency (the Franc), France educational system, military and commercial preferences. [8]

We recall the Paris massacre of up to 200 Algerians on 17

Islamophobia is the racism de jour

October 1961, during the Algerian War (1954–62). The Wiki article gives us a true picture of the nature of the French state and its police forces even today:

“Under orders from the head of the Parisian police, Maurice Papon, the French police attacked a forbidden demonstration of some 30,000 pro-FLN Algerians... Many demonstrators died when they were violently herded by police into the River Seine, with some thrown from bridges after being beaten unconscious. Other demonstrators were killed within the courtyard of the Paris police headquarters after being arrested and delivered there in police buses.

...Maurice Papon, who died in 2007, was the only Vichy France official to be convicted for his role in the deportation of Jews during World War Two. According to historian Jean-Luc Einaudi, a specialist in the 17 October 1961 massacre, some of the causes of the violent repression of the 17 October 1961 demonstration can best be understood in terms of the composition of the French police force itself, which still included many former members of the force in place during the World War II Vichy regime which had collaborated with the Gestapo to detain Jews, as for example in the Vel’ d’Hiv Roundup of 16–17 July 1942.

...Encouraged by far-right deputy Jean-Marie Le Pen, (in March 1958) 2,000 of them attempted to enter the Palais Bourbon, seat of the National Assembly, with shouts of “Sales Juifs! A la Seine! Mort aux fellaghas!” (Dirty Jews! Into the Seine (river)! Death to the (Algerian) rebels!). With the recommendation of Minister of Interior Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury, Maurice Papon was next day named prefect of the police.” [9]



Butchery by cowards

“Butchery by cowards” is what one Facebook post called the attack on Charlie Hebdo. But “Butchery by cowards” is dropping bombs from 20,000 feet on defenceless civilians because you never have to see their faces or look at what ‘doing your job’ does to built-up areas. The biggest cowards and butchers sit in the White House, Downing Street, the Élysée Palace and Tel Aviv. Their outraged victims’ relatives are often not very politically sussed on how to extract revolutionary justice from these mass murderers. They assassinate and target workers in imperialist countries who have no responsibility for what happened to them. And the imperialist spy agencies of the CIA, MI5, DGSE, Mossad etc. encourage and foster these methods by ‘false flag’ operations which are calculate to inflame sectarian tensions and strengthen the hand of the state against the oppressed.

The cause of the violence is imperialism not religious fundamentalism. Of course a revolutionary government would have to tackle this real problem sensitivity to separate the secondary oppressors from their victims, defend the peasants from the landlords, women from the imposition of the veil etc. But never, never as an ally of the ‘civilising mission’ of imperialism, never be taken in by that peace and democracy bullshit which only puts double chains on these oppressed people. That is unforgivable in Ukraine, in Palestine, in the whole of the Middle



A US B-52 drops its 750-pounds bombs over Vietnam Nov. 5, 1965, the real ‘butchery by cowards’ of some 1.5 million Vietnamese.

East and the whole semi-colonial world. The contrast between the bureaucratic/Stalinist/liberal imperialist approach to religion and the Marxist approach as practiced by the early Comintern is outline here in the 1997 document:

Afghanistan: Marxist Method vs. Bureaucratic method, By Gerry Downing 1997. The following quote indicates the tasks that a reformed Fourth International would face in these lands and how to tackle them:

“It took fifteen years of warfare to subdue the uprisings in the Soviet Central Asian republics caused in the main by Menshevik and Stalinist bureaucratic methods. Some conflict was and is inevitable if the power of the Mullahs, Khans and fundamentalists is again to be broken in the countries of Soviet Central Asia and in Afghanistan, Iran through to Algeria. What terrible price humanity must pay for the marginalisation of the transitional method of the Bolsheviks and the triumph of the counter-revolutionary bureaucratic methods of fighting reaction of Stalinism and petty-bourgeois nationalism in these states.” [10]

We defy anyone to say the cartoon of the kidnapped Nigerian women is not a vile racist, Islamophobic, sexist piece of French imperialist propaganda. It has a double meaning which suggests that the young women are ‘finally’ angry because their benefits were removed and they did not mind being kidnapped and repeatedly raped.

Islamophobia is the “racism du Jour” in the current political climate. And Charlie Hebdo lobbied in the anti Russian stuff on the Ukraine to make sure no one doubted where their true pro-Imperialist political loyalties lay.

Notes

- [1] Trotsky, Leon. *Why Marxists Oppose Individual Terrorism*, (November 1911), <http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1911/11/tia09.htm>
- [2] WWSW, “Free Speech” hypocrisy in the aftermath of the attack on Charlie Hebdo, <http://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2015/01/09/pers-j09.html>
- [3] Rap Artist With No Criminal Record Faces Life In Prison For Album Lyrics, November 19, 2014, <http://countercurrentnews.com/2014/11/rap-artist-with-no-criminal-record-faces-life-in-prison-for-album-lyrics/>
- [4] *The Family Brichta*, <http://www.holocaustresearchproject.org/survivor/brichta1.html>
- [5] <https://medium.com/@asgharbukhari/charlie-hebdo-this-attack-was-nothing-to-do-with-free-speech-it-was-about-war-26aff1c3e998>
- [6] *Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT)*, 9.1.2015, <http://www.thecommunists.net>
- [7] Ibid.
- [8] *14 African Countries Forced by France to Pay Colonial Tax For the Benefits of Slavery and Colonization*, By Mawuna Remarque Koutonin <http://www.siliconafrika.com/france-colonial-tax/>
- [9] *Paris massacre of 1961*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paris_massacre_of_1961

Islamophobia is the racism de jour

LCFI statement on Charlie Hebdo: 10/1/15

The LCFI asserts that the roots cause of the deaths at the Charlie Hebdo office in Paris on 7 January is imperialism's wars on Muslim lands, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Mali, Syria, etc. Marxists never equate the violence of the oppressor with that of the oppressed, we make no moral judgements on the people who have carried out these attacks and recognise the deaths caused by imperialism in these lands run into the hundreds of thousands, if not the low millions.

Already by May 12, 1996, in response to the question from Lesley Stahl, "We have heard that half a million children have died. I mean, that's more children than died in Hiroshima. And, you know, is the price worth it?" Madeleine Albright, then United States Ambassador to the United Nations replied, "We think the price is worth it."

We do not have the right to dictate to the militant representatives of the oppressed how they conduct their struggles, not the IRA or the Palestinians or those fighting imperialism in the Middle East today. But as Marxists we oppose individual acts of terror like this on the political grounds that it cannot achieve its aims of defeating imperialism by these methods and in fact only ends up doing the opposite; strengthening the hands of the state against them and alienation their only true potential allies, the French and international working class, as we discuss below.

As Trotsky said:

"In our eyes, individual terror is inadmissible precisely because it belittles the role of the masses in their own consciousness, reconciles them to their powerlessness, and turns their eyes and hopes towards a great avenger and liberator who some day will come and accomplish his mission. The anarchist prophets of the 'propaganda of the deed' can argue all they want about the elevating and stimulating influence of terrorist acts on the masses. Theoretical considerations and political experience prove otherwise. The more 'effective' the terrorist acts, the greater their impact, the more they reduce the interest of the masses in self-organisation and self-education. But the smoke from the confusion clears away, the panic disappears, the successor of the murdered minister makes his appearance, life again settles into the old rut, the wheel of capitalist exploitation turns as before; only the police repression grows more savage and brazen. And as a result, in place of the kindled hopes and artificially aroused excitement comes disillusionment and apathy." [1]

Free Speech and Gross Hypocrisy

The great cry of imperialism today is "freedom of speech". One is not permitted to shout 'fire' in a crowded theatre because although this would appear to fall under the remit of freedom of expression this freedom is curtailed due to social responsibilities. As such one should not cry 'scrounger' at a minority group who suffer disproportionately from unemployment, and it may cause a social stampede and get someone beaten up in the street.

The WSWS commented on 9 January:

"In its use of crude and vulgar caricatures that purvey a sinister and stereotyped image of Muslims, Charlie Hebdo recalls the cheap racist publications that played a significant role in fostering the anti-Semitic agitation that swept France during the famous Dreyfus Affair, which erupted in 1894 after a Jewish officer was accused and falsely convicted of espionage on behalf of Germany. In whipping up popular hatred of Jews, La Libre Parole ['Free Speech'],

NICOLINO ET TIGNOUS au Salon du nucléaire THORET ne prie pas le bon Dieu au ciné CATHERINE n'a que du bonheur au Salon du mariage ZINEB Pourquoi Erdogan trahit les Kurdes

CHARLIE HEBDO
NOUVELLE FORMULE
23 OCTOBRE 2014 / N° 1166 / 3€



We defy anyone to say this is not a vile racist, Islamophobic, sexist piece of French imperialist propaganda. It has a double meaning which suggests that the young women are 'finally' angry because their benefits are being removed and did not mind being kidnapped and repeatedly raped.

published by the infamous Edoard Adolfe Drumont, made highly effective use of cartoons that employed the familiar anti-Semitic devices. The caricatures served to inflame public opinion, inciting mobs against Dreyfus and his defenders, such as Emile Zola, the great novelist and author of 'Accuse.' [2]

Freedom of expression is not an abstract, free-floating right, but rather should be employed in conjunction with, and properly situated amongst, the social, historical and political context of the day. In that great bastion of "free speech", California, by far the wealthiest and most 'liberal' state of the union, a rap artist, Brandon Duncan, also known as Tiny Doo, with no criminal record, faces life in prison for album lyrics. And here is the convoluted 'logic' behind the charge:

"We're not just talking about a CD of anything, of love songs. We're talking about a CD (cover) ... there is a revolver with bullets," Deputy District Attorney Anthony Campagna said, justifying his unconstitutional prosecution of the musician. Duncan is charged with "gang conspiracy" because his "gang gained in status" from crimes, and this – prosecutors argue – allowed him to "sell more albums." [3]

The state of California wants to affirm in law that freedom of speech is a privilege, not a right.

Continued on p. 33

Leon Trotsky: I am confident of the victory of the Fourth International; Go Forward!